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HEROISM.

BY MAMIE SADLER.

"I would be grand to be a hero,
If one only could attain,
To the end at the beginning,
Without feeling all the pain;
If the right could only conquer,
Ere the heart had borne so long,
All the weary aching burdens
Of oppression and of wrong.

If the soul could be unbosomed,
And the world but only knew,
That the cruel bitter falsehoods,
Were so terribly untrue;
If the brightness of the setting,
Glimpsed o'er the darkened way,
Showing through the distant gloaming,
Tokens of a brighter day.

"I would be grand to be a hero,
Yes, I'm sure 'twould be sublime;
If you had not first to suffer,
And to weep with vice and crime.
But alas! soon should weary,
Of the hero I would frame,
For a man without a trial
Is a hero but by name.

SIDONIE,
THE INTRIGANTE.

THE FROMONT JEUNE ET RISLER AINÉ OF ALPHONSE DAUDET.

Translated by George B. Cox.

[This story was commenced in No. 33, Vol. 56. Back numbers can always be obtained.]

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BOOK III.

II.

EXPLANATION.

In truth it was time that the judge had come.

In the Parisian maëlstrom this little woman whirled desperately. Sustained by her folly even she floated yet; but her enormous expenditures, the luxuries that she affected, the contempt that she was acquiring day by day for the least accomplishments, all announced that she would speedily sink, drawing after her the honor of her husband and perhaps also the fortune and the name of an important house ruined by her madness.

The neighborhood in which she now dwelt hastened her fall still more. In Paris, in those quarters of small shopkeepers which are veritable provinces of ill-wishers and gossips, she was obliged to exercise greater caution; but in her dwelling at Asnieres, surrounded by actors' chalets, by doubtful households, by clerks enjoying their vacation, she fettered herself no longer. There was about her an atmosphere of vice which she liked, which she breathed without disgust. The ball music amused her, in the evening in her little garden.

A pistol shot fired in a neighboring house, one night, which buzzed all the vicinity with a common and sottish intrigue, made her dream of similar adventures. She also wished to have "histories." Preserving no longer any moderation in her dress, the days on which she did not promenade upon the quay of Asnieres, in a short skirt, with a rattan held up in her hand, like a fashionable of Trouville or of Houlgate, she remained at home in a wrapper, as her neighbors did, absolutely inactive, scarcely looking after her dwelling, in which she was robbed as if she had been a coquette, without knowing anything about it. That same woman, who had been seen passing on horseback every morning, chatted for whole hours with her domestic about the strange households which surrounded her.

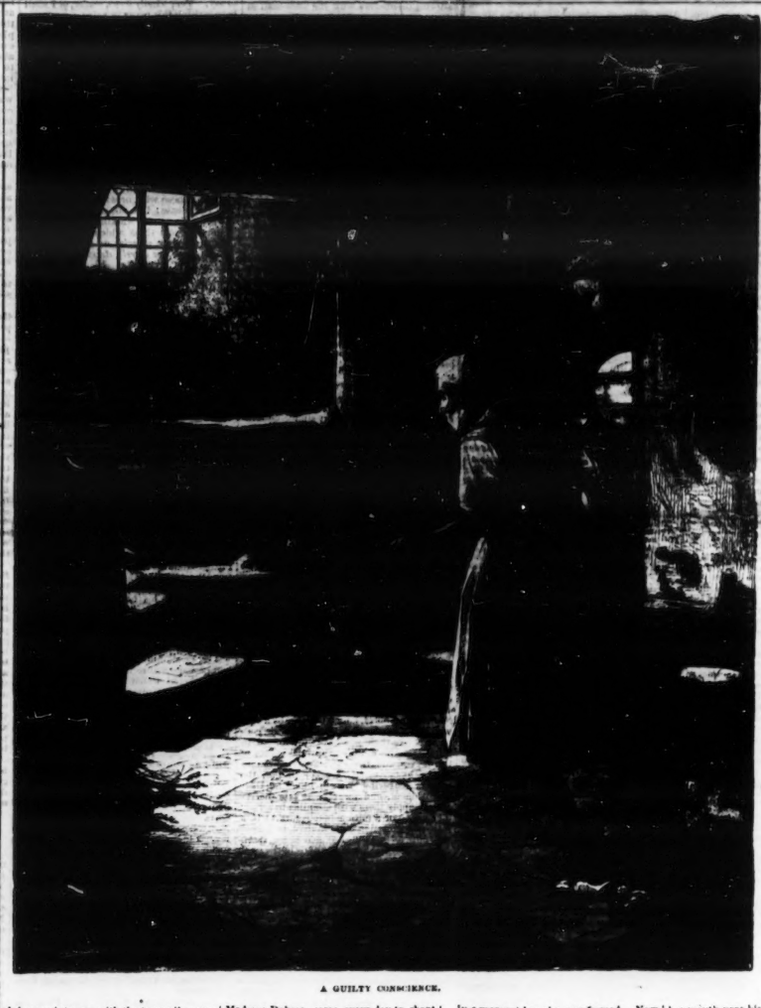
Little by little, she had subsided to her old level and even below it. From the rich, highly respectable station to which her marriage had raised her, she had sunk down to the rank of mistress. By dint of traveling in railroad cars with females fantastically accoutred, their hair over their eyes *a la chien*, or floating down their backs *a la Genevieve de Brabant*, she had grown to resemble them. She made herself blonde during two months, to the great astonishment of Risler, thoroughly amazed at the change in his darling. As to George, all these eccentricities amused him, causing him to find ten women in the same person. He was the real husband, the master of the house.

To amuse Sidonie, he had procured for her a semblance of society, his bachelor friends, some commercial men of the world, scarcely ever any women; women have too sharp eyes. Madame Dobson was the sole friend.

They organized grand dinners, excursions upon the water, displays of fireworks. Day by day the situation of the poor Risler became more difficult, more odious. When he came home in the evening, fatigued, ill-dressed, he was forced to second quickly to his chamber to make himself presentable.

"We have company to dinner," said his wife; "hurry!"

And he sat down at the table the last, after shaking hands with his guests, friends of Fromont Jeune, whose names he scarcely knew. Strange to relate, the business of the manufactory was often transacted at that table, to which George brought his club acquaintances with the tranquil assurance of the man who pays.



A GUILTY CONSCIENCE.

"Business breakfasts and dinners!" In Risler's eyes this word "business" explained everything: the constant presence of his partner, the choice of guests, and the marvelous toilets of Sidonie, who made herself beautiful and coquettish in the interest of the firm. This coquetry of his mistress filled Fromont Jeune with despair. At all hours of the day he came to surprise her, uneasy, distrustful, fearing to leave long to itself that cunning and perverted nature.

"What has become of your husband?" asked papa Gardinois in a bantering tone of his granddaughter. "Why doesn't he come oftener?"

Claire excused George, but this continual abandonment had begun to alarm her. Now she wept on receiving those little fragments of letters, those dispatches which reached her daily at meal-times: "Do not expect me this evening, dear friend. I cannot come to Savigny until to-morrow or the day after by the night train."

She ate sorrowfully opposite an empty place, and, without knowing herself deceived, felt that her husband was neglecting her. He was so absent-minded, when a family fete or some other circumstance kept him forcibly at the mansion, so silent about what occupied him. Claire having no longer with Sidonie anything but very distant relations, knew nothing of what was passing at Asnieres; but, when George started away again eagerly, smilingly, she tormented her solitude with unavowed suspicions, and, like those who await a great sorrow, felt all at once an immense void in her heart, a place ready for catastrophes.

Her husband was no happier than she. That cruel Sidonie seemed to take pleasure in tormenting him. She allowed everybody to pay attention to her. At that moment a certain Cazabon, called Cazaboni, an Italian tenor of Toulouse, presented by Madame Dobson, came every day to chant disquieting duos. George, terribly jealous, hurried to Asnieres in the afternoon, neglected all, and already had commenced to find that Risler did not watch his wife sufficiently. He had wished him blind only so far as concerned himself.

Ah, if he had been the husband, he would have taught her a thing or two! But he had no power over her, and she did not hesitate to tell him so. Sometimes, also, with that invincible logic which comes often to the greatest fools, he thought that, a deceiver himself, perhaps he deserved to be deceived. On the whole, his was a sorrowful life. He passed his time in running to the jewelers, the dealers in dry-goods, in inventing for her gifts, surprises. Ah, he knew her well! He knew that he could amuse her with jewels, not retain her, and that the day on which she grew weary—

Sidonie was not wearied yet. She led the life that she desired, had all the happiness that she could attain. Her love for George had nothing in it of the inflammable or of the romantic. He was for her like a second husband, younger and above all richer than the other. To better gloss over their sin, she had drawn her parents to Asnieres, had lodged them in a little house at the further end of the place, and of her father vainglorious and voluntarily blind, of her mother tender and always dazzled, she made for herself a cover of respectability of which she felt the need in proportion as she advanced on her downward career.

All was well-arranged in that wicked little hovel which planned vice coolly; and it seemed as if her life was destined to continue thus tranquilly, when suddenly Frantz Risler arrived.

Promptly on seeing him enter, she had comprehended that her repose was menaced, that something very grave was about to take place between them.

In a moment her plan was formed. Now she was about to put it in operation.

The pavilion which they had entered, a great circular affair the four windows of which looked out upon different landscapes, was furnished for the summer siestas, for the hot hours in which a refuge was sought from the sun and the murmurs of the garden. A large divan very low stretched around it. A little lacquer table very low also stood in the middle, loaded with odd numbers of worldly journals.

The hangings were new, and the Persian designs—birds flying among bluish reeds—had exactly the effect of a summer dream, a light image floating before the closing eyes. The lowered blinds, the matting spread upon the inlaid floor, the Virginia jessamine which interlaced without all along the lattice-work, preserved a delicious coolness increased by the neighboring noise of the river unceasingly agitated, and the splash of its little waves upon the strand.

Sidonie, as soon as she came in, seated herself, pushing back her long white skirt which settled down like a fall of snow at the foot of the divan; and her eyes sparkling, her mouth smiling, leaning over a trifle her little head of which the knot at the side augmented still more the capricious perverseness, she waited.

Frantz, very pale, remained on his feet, looking around him. Then, at the end of a moment:

"I compliment you, Madame," said he; "you understand what is comfortable!"

And immediately, as if he was afraid that starting from such a distance the conversation would not reach quickly enough the point to which he wished to bring it, he added abruptly:

"To whom do you owe all this luxury? Is it to your husband or to your lover?"

Without stirring from the divan, without even lifting her eyes to him, she responded:

"To both!"

He was somewhat disconcerted by so much assurance.

"You admit then that this man is your lover?"

"Not so fast! Parbleu!"

Frantz looked at her for a moment without a word. She also had grown pale, despite her calmness, and her eternal little smile no longer fluttered about the corner of her mouth.

Then, he broke out:

"Hear me well, Sidonie. My brother's name, that name which he has given to his wife, is also mine. Since Risler is mad enough, blind enough to permit you to dishonor it, it is for me to defend it from your attacks. Now, I swear to you that I will warn M. Fromont that he must change his mistress on the instant, and that he must seek his ruin elsewhere. If not——"

"If not?" demanded Sidonie, who whilst he had been speaking had not ceased to play with her rings.

"If not, I will reveal to my brother what is taking place in his household, and you will be surprised at Risler whom you will then discover to be as violent, as formidable as he is ordinarily inoffensive.

"My revelation will kill him perhaps, but you may rest assured that he will kill you first!"

She shrugged her shoulders.

"Well, let him kill me! What differences will that make to me?"

This was said with an air so crushed, so detached from everything, that Frantz, in spite of himself, felt a little pity for this beautiful creature, young, happy, who spoke of death with such self-abandonment.

"You love him strongly, then?" said he in a voice already somewhat softened. "You love him strongly then, this Fromont, since you would rather die than give him up?"

She drew herself up quickly.

"What? Love that booby, that gewgaw, that silly girl in men's clothes? You should know better! I took him as I would have taken another."

"Why?"

"Because it was necessary, because I was beside myself, because I had in my heart and still have there a criminal passion that I wish to root out, no matter at what cost!"

She had arisen and had uttered these words, her eyes looking in his eyes, her entire frame trembling.

A criminal passion! Whom then did she love?

Frantz was afraid to ask her.

Without yet suspecting anything, he comprehended that that look, that breath, bent towards him, were about to reveal to him something terrible.

But his duty as a judge obliged him to know all.

"Who is it?" he demanded.

She answered in a hollow voice

"You know very well that 'tis yourself!"

She was his brother's wife.

For two years he had thought of her only as a sister. For him, his brother's wife no longer had anything in common with his former betrothed, and it would have been to commit a crime to recognize in a single feature of her face her to whom in the past he had so often said: "I love you."

And now it was she who told him that she loved him.

The unhappy judge stood stricken, amazed, without a word of response.

She, looking at him, awaited.

It was one of those spring days, full of fever and of sun, to which the vapor of past rains gives a softness, a strange melancholy. The air was mild, perfumed with fresh flowers which, on this first warm day, grew as strongly fragrant as violets in a lady's muff. Through its lofty windows half-opened, the place in which they were, drew in all this intoxication of odors. Without, they heard the Sabbath organs, distant calls upon the river, and nearer, in the garden, the amorous and languid voice of Madame Dobson, which sighed out:

"On dit que tu te maries;
Tu sais que j'en puis mourir-i-i-ir!"

"Yes, Frantz, I have always loved you," said Sidonie. "That love, which I renounced in the past because I was a young girl, and because young girls knew not what they do; that love nothing has been able either to efface or lessen in me. When I learned that Desiree loved you also, she so unfortunate, so deprived of pleasures, in a great access of generosity I wished to make the happiness of her life by sacrificing my own and at once I repulsed you that you might go to her. Ah, since you have been far away, I have comprehended that the sacrifice was beyond my strength. Poor little Desiree! How I have cursed her in the bottom of my heart. Will you believe it?—since that time I have avoided seeing her, meeting her. The sight of her gave me too much pain."

"But, if you loved me," said Frantz in a low tone, "if you loved me, why did you marry my brother?"

She replied without the least confusion:

"Why did I marry Risler? 'Twas to bring me near to you, I said to myself: I cannot be his wife. Well, I will become his sister. At least, as such, it will be permitted me to love him still, and we shall not pass all our lives as strangers to each other.' Alas, those were but the innocent dreams in which we indulge at twenty years of age and the worthlessness of which experience very quickly shows us. I could not love you as a sister, Frantz; neither could I forget you, my marriage prevented that. With another husband, I might have perhaps accomplished it, but with Risler it was terrible. He talked to me constantly of you, of your success, of your future. Frantz had said this, Frantz had done that. He loves you so much, the poor fellow. And besides, which was the most cruel for me, your brother resembles you. There is in your walk, in your features a family likeness, in your voices above all, since often I have closed my eyes as he caressed me, saying inwardly: 'Tis he! 'Tis Frantz! When I saw that this guilty thought had become a torment, an evil possession, I sought to draw myself from it. I consented to listen to this George who had long pursued me, to change my life, to make it noisy, agitated. But, I swear to you, Frantz, that in this whirlpool of pleasure into which I have cast myself, I have never ceased to think of you, and if anybody has the right to come here to demand of me an account of my conduct, certes, it is not you, who, without wishing it, have made me what I am!"

She ceased.

Frantz did not dare to look at her any longer. In the past moment he had found her too beautiful, too desirable. She was his brother's wife.

Neither did he dare to speak. The unhappy man felt that his former passion had reinstalled itself despotically in his heart, and that now, looks, words, all that might spring from him would be love.

And she was his brother's wife!

"Ah, we are wretched, wretched," said the poor judge letting himself sink beside her on the divan.

These few words were already a baseness, a commencement of abandonment, as if Destiny in showing herself so cruel had taken from him the force to defend himself. Sidonie had placed her hand in his: "Frantz—Frantz!" and they remained there beside each other, silent and passionate, lulled by the romance of Madame Dobson which came to them by fits through the trees:

"Ton amour c'est ma folie,
Helas! Je n'en puis guer-i-i-ir!"

Suddenly the great bulk of Risler appeared before the door.

"Here, Chebe, here. They are in the pavilion."

And at the same time the good man entered, escorted by his father-in-law, and his mother-in-law, whom he had been to seek.

There was a moment of effusion and of innumerable huggings. It was a sight to see with what a protecting air M. Chebe examined the tall youth who stood a head and shoulders above him.

"Well, my young one, does the Suez Canal get on to suit you?"

Madame Chebe, for whom Frantz had always remained a little her future son-in-law, embraced him with all her might, whilst Risler, maladroit as ever in his galeties and his expansions, made great gestures upon the steps, talked of killing several fatted calves for the return of the prodigal son, and in a noisy voice, which resounded in all the neighboring gardens, cried out to the singing teacher:

"Madame Dobson, Madame Dobson, without commanding you, what you are singing is too sorrowful. Satan take expression for to-day. Play us rather something right lively, suitable for dancing, whilst I lead Madame Chebe in a waltz."

"Risler, Risler, are you mad? My son-in-law!"

"Come, come, mother, you must—hop!"

Heavily, around the walks, he drew, in an automatic waltz *a six temps*, a true waltz of Vaucanson, his mother-in-law out of breath, who stopped at each step to restore to their habitual order the untied strings of her cap and the lace of her shawl her beautiful shawl of Sidonie's wedding.

He was drunk with joy, this poor Risler.

For Frantz, this was a long and never to be forgotten day of anguish. Carriage ride, trip on the water, lunch on the grass on the Ile des Ravageurs, they did not spare him a single one of the charms of Asnieres: and all the time, in the hot sun of the highway, in the reflection of the waves, he was forced to laugh, gossip, tell of his voyage, talk of the isthmus of Suez, of the works undertaken, hear the secret complaints of M. Chebe always furious against his children, the details of his brother concerning the printing press. Rotary, my dear Frantz, rotary and dodecagon! Sidonie left these

gentlemen to chat among themselves and seemed absorbed in deep meditations. From time to time, she threw a word, a sad smile to Madame Dobson, and Franta, without daring to look directly at her, followed the movements of her parasol lined with blue, the fold of her robe.

How much she had changed in two years! How beautiful she had become!

Then there came to him horrible thoughts. There were visits to Longchamps that day. Carriages passed in review, carriages, grand it, driven by women with painted faces, wrapped up in close veils. Immovable upon their seats, they held their long whips straight as broken with well-built gestures, and nothing seemed living in them but their charcoaled eyes, fixed on the heads of the horses. As they passed, people turned around. All eyes followed them, as if drawn in the train of their passage.

Sidonie resembled those creatures. She herself might have thus driven George's carriage; for Franta was in George's carriage. He had drunk George's wine. All the luxury that the family enjoyed came from George.

It was shameful, revolting. He had wished to cry out so to his brother. It was his duty, having come expressly for that purpose. But he had no longer the courage.

Ah, the unfortunate judge!

In the evening after dinner, in the salon open to the fresh air of the river, Rixler asked his wife to sing. He desired that she should show to Franta all her new talents.

Leaning upon the piano, Sidonie made exciting with a mad cry, while Madame Dobson prelude, shaking her long curls.

"But I know nothing. What do you want me to sing?"

She, however, finally decided for herself. Pale, disenchanted, flown away above things, in the trembling light of the wax candles which seemed to burn perfumes, so fragrant were the lilacs and the hyacinths of the garden, she sang with a Creole song very popular in Louisiana and which Madame Dobson herself had transcribed for the voice and the piano:

"Pauv' petit Mam'zelle Zizi,
Quoi t'amou, l'amou qui tourne la tete a li."

And in telling the history of that unhappy little Zizi whom passion had driven to madness, Sidonie had just the air of a lovesick girl. With what touching expression, what cry of wounded love she took up that refrain so melancholy and so soft to hear in the infantile patois of the colonies:

"Quoi l'amou, l'amou qui tourne la tete a li."

He also had enough to drive him mad, the unhappy judge.

But no! The siren had ill-chosen her romance. At the name alone of Mam'zelle Zizi, Franta found himself transported all at once to a sorrowful chamber of the Marais, very far from the salon of Sidonie, and the pity of his heart called up the image of that little Desiree Delobelle who had loved him for so long. Up to fifteen years of age, they had only called her Zizee or Zizi, and she was truly the "pauv' petit Zizi" of the Creole song, the lover always forsaken, always faithful. The other had need to sing now, Franta no longer heard her, no longer saw her. He was away beside the great arm-chair, upon the little low seat on which he had watched so often whilst awaiting the father. Yes, safety was there for him, nowhere else than there. He must take refuge in the love of that child, throw himself impetuously before her, say to her: "Take me—save me!" And who knew? She loved him so much. Perhaps she would save him, would cure him of his culpable passion.

"Where are you going?" demanded Rixler, seeing his brother rise precipitately, as soon as the last flourish was ended.

"I must return—it is late."

"How! You will not sleep here? But your chamber is ready."

"All ready," added Sidonie with a singular look.

He excused himself excitedly. His presence in Paris was indispensable for certain very important missions with which the Company had charged him. They strove still to retain him, until he was already in the anechamber, had traversed the garden in the moonlight, and, among all the noises of Asnieres, had started for the depot on a run.

When he had gone, Rixler ascended to his chamber, Sidonie and Madame Dobson lingered at the windows of the salon. The music of the neighboring Casino came to them with the "Oh!" of the bargemen and the sound of the dances like a tambourine movement rhythmically had hollow.

"He will give us trouble!" said Madame Dobson.

"Oh, I have checkmated him!" responded Sidonie, "but I must be careful. I shall be closely watched now. He is so jealous. I shall write to Cazabani not to come any more for some time; and to-morrow morning, you must tell George to go spend fifteen days at Savigny."

III.

"PAUV' PETIT MAM'ZELLE ZIZI."

Oh, but Desiree was happy!

Franta came every day to seat himself at her feet as in the old times upon the little low chair, and it was no longer to talk to her of Sidonie.

In the morning, as soon as she went to work, she saw the door half open softly: "Good day, Mam'zelle Zizi." He always called her thus now, by her little girl name, and her pretty too he said: "Good day, Mam'zelle Zizi!"

In the evening, they waited for the "father" together, and whilst she worked, he made her tremble with the recital of his voyages.

"What is the matter with you? You are no longer the same creature!" said Mother Delobelle to her, astonished to see her so gay and above excited. The old dread is that instead of remaining as formerly with-out ceasing fastened in her arm-chair with the resignation of a young grandmother, the little lame girl rose up at each instant, went towards the window with a bound as if she had been endowed with wings, strove to stand on her feet, very straightly, asking in a low voice of her mother:

"Can they see that when I do not walk?"

From her pretty little head where it had concentrated itself until now in the arrangements of her head-dress, her coquetry spread itself over her entire person, like her long hair, curly and fine, when she loosened it. She was very, very coquettish at present, and everybody noticed it. The birds and bags for ornaments had themselves a little air altogether peculiar.

Oh you! Desiree Delobelle was happy! For some days M. Franta had talked of going all together to the country, and as the father, always so good, so grandfather, had consented to a day's leave of absence for the ladies, they departed all four one Sunday morning.

It is impossible to say how fine the weather was that day. When Desiree opened her window at six o'clock, when in the morning mist she saw the sun already warm and bright, when she thought of the trees, of the fields, of the highways, of all that miraculous nature that she had not seen for so long and which she was going to see on the arm of Franta, the tears rose to her eyes. The bells which sounded, the noises of Paris mounting already from the pavements of the streets, her dressing up for sunday—that fete of the poor—which lighted even the chunks of the small coal dealers, all the dawn of that exceptional morning was hailed by her lengthily and devotedly.

The evening before, Franta had brought her a parasol, a little parasol with an ivory handle; with that, she had arranged a toilet very neat but very simple, as became a poor little infirm one who wished to pass without being seen. And it is not enough to say that the poor little infirm one was charming.

At nine o'clock to the moment, Franta arrived with a carriage for the day, and responded to find Fi's guests. Mam'zelle Zizi descended, supported all about, leaning upon the bainbridge, without hesitation. Mother Delobelle came behind her, watching over her; and the illustrious actor, his overcoat upon his arm, went down after them with young Rixler to open the coach door.

Oh, the splendid carriage ride, the fine country, the beautiful river, the handsome trees!

No need to ask her where it was; Desiree never knew. She could only say that the sun was more brilliant in that place than anywhere else, the birds more gay, the woods more profound; and she told the truth!

When very small, she had had sometimes such days of open air and of long country promenades with her papa, united that, poverty, that sedentary life, so grateful to infirm people, had held her as if nailed in the old quarter of Paris that she inhabited, and of which the lofty roofs, the windows with iron balconies, the manufactory chimneys, glaring with the red of their new bricks upon the black walls of historic hotels, had made for her a horizon always alike and sombre. For a long time past she had in fact known no more of flowers except the ropeweeds of her window, no more of trees except the acacias of the Promont manufactory dimly seen from afar in the smoke.

Therefore, what joy swelled her heart, when she found herself in the open country. Brightened up with all her pleasure and with her revived youth, she went from astonishment to astonishment, clapping her hands, uttering little bird-like cries; and the outbursts of her innocent curiosity disguised the hesitation of her step.

Positively, *that* did not show itself too much. Besides, Franta was always there, ready to sustain her, to give her his hand to help her over the ditches, and so eager, his eyes so tender. A marvelous day passed like a dream. The great blue sky floating vaporously among the branches, those horizons of undersood, where to stretch out at the foot of the trees, sheltered and mysterious, where the flowers grow straighter and higher, where the gilded mosses seem rays of sunshine at the trunks of oaks, the bright surprise of the glades, all, even to the lassitude of a day of walking in the open air, delighted and charmed her.

Towards evening, when on the borders of the forest, she saw—in the fading light, —the white roads scattered about the country, the river like a thread of silver, and in the distance, at the separation of two hills, a fog of grey roofs, of spires, of copulas that they told her was Paris, she carried away with a look, in a corner of her memory, all that flowery landscape, perfumed with love and with June hawthorns, as if never, never more, would she see it again.

The journey which the little lame girl had brought back from that charming promenade performed her chamber for eight days. There was mixed in it among the hyacinths, the violets, the white thorn, a host of little nameless flowers, those flowers of the poor which flying seeds cause to grow a little everywhere on the edges of the highways. In regarding those slender corsets pale blue, bright rose, all those shades so delicate which the flowers invented before the colorists, many times during those eight days, Desiree took again her promenade. She recalled to herself the little tuft of moss from which she picked them, searched for under the leaves, twining her fingers in those of Franta. Those great wide rivers had been taken from the brink of a ditch all moist still from the winter rains, and to reach them, she had leaned heavily upon Franta's arm. All these remembrances came back to her as she toiled. During this time, the perfume which entered by the open window, made the feathers of the birds sparkle. Spring, youth, songs, perfumes had transfigured this sad work-room of the fifth flat, and Desiree said seriously to Mother Delobelle, as she smelled her friend's bouquet:

"Have you noticed, mother, how nice the flowers smell this year?"

And Franta too began to be under the spell. Little by little Mam'zelle Zizi took possession of his heart and drove out even the remembrance of Sidonie. It is true that the judge did all he could to effect that. At all hours of the day he was beside Desiree, and clung to her like a child. Never once had he dared to return to Asnieres. The other still caused him too much fear.

"Come and see us a while in our house—Sidonie implores you," said the good Rixler to him from time to time, when he called on him at the manufactory. But Franta persevered. He urged all kinds of business to continually put off his visit until the morrow. This was easy with Rixler, more than ever occupied with his printing press, the manufacture of which he was about to commence.

Each time that Franta descended from his brother's office, old Sigismond watched for him in the passage and took a few steps with him to the open air, his pens behind his sleeves, his pen and his penknife in his hand. He posted the young man on the affairs of the manufactory. For some time past, things had the air of moving better. M. George came regularly to his office and returned to sleep every night at Savigny. They presented no more bills at the counting-house. It appeared even that the Madame also kept herself more quiet.

The cashier was triumphant.

"You see, my boy, that I did well to inform you. Your arrival has sufficed to put everything in order. 'Tis all the same," added the good man, carried away by habit, "'tis all the same—I have no confidence!"

"Do not fear, Monsieur Sigismond, I am on the spot," said the judge.

"You are not going away yet, are you, my dear Franta?"

"No, no, not yet. I have an important affair to finish first."

"Ah, so much the better!"

Franta's important affair was his marriage with Desiree Delobelle. He had not yet spoken of it to any one, not even to her; but Mam'zelle Zizi must have suspected something, for from day to day she had become gayer and prettier, as if she had foreseen that the moment would soon come in which she would have need of all her joy and of all her beauty.

They were alone in the workroom one Sunday afternoon. Mother Delobelle had gone out, filled with pride to show herself once on the arm of her great man, leaving Franta with her daughter to keep her company. Carefully dressed, with a fete air spread over all his person, Franta had that day a singular look, at once timid and resolute, tender and solemn, and from the fashion almost in which the little low chair was put beside the great arm-chair, the great arm-chair comprehended that a very grave secret was about to be confided to it, and it suspected somewhat what it was. The conversation began at first with indifferent words which were interrupted at each instant by long periods of silence, as when the rowers on the go at each station to take breath too ards the end of the trip.

"The weather is fine to-day."

"Oh, very fine!"

"Our bouquet still keeps its perfume."

"Oh, very well!"

And in merely pronouncing these words so simple, their voices were affected by that which it was shortly to be said.

Finally the little low chair was drawn still a little nearer to the great arm-chair; and pausing at each other, their hands interlaced, the two young people called each other softly, slowly, by name:

"Desiree!"

"Franta."

At that moment there came a knock at the door.

Only the little discreet knock of a finely gloved hand which feared to soil itself with the least contact.

"Come in!" said Desiree with a slight movement of impatience, and Sidonie appeared, beautiful, coquettish and good-humored. She had come to see her little Zizi, to embrace her in passing. For such a long while she had desired it.

Finally the visit lasted two hours. Franta found it fearfully long, and in all the joy of chatting with her old friend, she scarcely looked at him. After effusions, caresses, kindly talks about the manufactory, she had to see again the window of the landing, the lodgings of the laborers. That would amuse her in reviving thus all her youth.

"Do you remember, Franta, when the Princess Parasol came into your chamber, her little head held erect beneath a diadem of birds' feathers?"

Franta did not reply. He was too much moved to reply. Something told him that it was for him, for him alone that she was man had come, that she wished to recover him, to prevent him from belonging to another, and the unhappy man saw with terror that she would not have to make much effort to accomplish her will. At her very entrance, all his heart had been recaptured.

Desiree suspected nothing. Sidonie had an air so fresh, so beautiful. And besides now, they were brother and sister. There was no more passion possible between them.

Nevertheless the little lame girl had a vague presentiment of evil, when Sidonie, after a call to the door, and prepared to depart, turned negligently to say to her brother-in-law:

"By the way, Franta, I am charged by Rixler to beg you to dine with us this evening. The carriage is below. We shall take him up as we pass the manufactory.

Then, with the prettiest smile in the world:

"You will let us have him, will you not, Zizee? Rest easy, we will give him back to you."

And he had the courage to go, the ingrate! He departed with her beautiful sister-in-law turning back once, borne away by his passion as by a furious sea, and neither that day, nor the following days, nor ever in the future could the great arm-chair of Mam'zelle Zizi discover in the little low chair had had of so much interest to impart to it.

IV.

THE WAITING ROOM.

Ah, yes! I have you, now then ever said for all time! Or would one to escape? Good fortune is more fickle than we are. After all, it is a crime for us to love each other? Is a woman bound to one. Have we not the right to choose our love, despite the fate which has separated us? Then, come—we do not. To-morrow evening, at the Lyons depot, at ten o'clock. The tickets will be purchased, and I will await you.

For a month Sidonie had hoped for this letter, a month in which she had put in operation all her fascinations and her tricks to lead her brother-in-law to this explosion of written passion. She had had trouble to accomplish it. It was not easy to pervert to crime an honest and young heart like this of Franta, and in that great struggle in which he who loved truly fought against his own cause, she had felt herself often at the end of her strength and almost discouraged. When she had believed him entirely vanquished, his integrity had suddenly revolted, and he was all ready to *fly*, to escape from her yet.

Hence what triumph for her, when this letter so desired arrived one morning, Madame Dobson was there. She had just arrived, charged with the complaints of George who fretted afar from his mistress and began to be uneasy about that brother-in-law more assiduous, more exacting than a husband.

"Ah! the poor dear! the poor dear!" said the sentimental American;" if you could only see how unhappy he is."

And, whilst shaking her curls, she united her roll of music, drew out from it the letters of the poor dear which she had concealed carefully between the leaves of her romances, happy to find herself mixed up in this intrigue, to exalt herself in an atmosphere of intrigue and of mystery which softened her cold eyes and her dry blonde complexion.

The strangest thing was that whilst lending herself very willingly to this going and coming of love-letters, this young and pretty Dobson had never either written or received a single one on her own account.

All the rest between Asnieres and Paris, an amorous message under her wing, this singular carrier pigeon remained faithful to her dove-cote and owed only for encouragement.

When Sidonie had shown her Franta's letter, Madame Dobson asked:

"What are you going to say in reply?"

"Ta done. I have replied yes!"

"Will you run away with that madman?"

Sidonie burst out laughing:

"Good gracious, no! I have said yes, that he may fly to wait for me at the depot. That's all! 'Tis about the least I can do, to give him a quarter of an hour of anguish. He has made me unhappy enough for a month. Think that I have changed all my life for this gentleman! I have been forced to give up my receptions, to close my door against my friends, to all the young and amiable persons I knew, to commence with George and to finish with you. For you know, my dear, you also displeased him, and he would have wanted to send you away like the rest."

That which Sidonie did not tell, and her strongest reason for hating Franta, was that he had caused her fear, that he had caused her great fear in threatening her with exposure to her husband. Up to this moment, she had fully ill at ease, and her life, her dear life that she loved so much, had seemed to her seriously exposed. Those men too double and full of cunning, of white but stupe the results of which cannot be calculated, like those explosive powders, without either color or taste, that one fears to employ because one does not know their power. Positively the idea that some day or other her husband might be informed of her conduct terrified her.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

ON HEALTHY EXERCISE.

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.

It is curious how many persons one meets, always daily, who seem entirely ignorant that a great difference exists between adipose tissue—fat, in fact—and muscular flesh. This is simply one more proof of how much a really useful education is neglected at our public schools. When the pernicious habit is only found in the lower circles of life, we should not marvel so much, but it is just as often all the other way. I was fishing at one time in company with a well-to-do gentleman. It was with a feeling of pride that nearly made his eyes water, that this gentleman, having had occasion to take off his coat and roll his sleeves up, slapped himself on the forearm so he made the remark—

"Look there, doctor. You don't see the like of that every morning—eh? There's flesh for you. There is solidity."

It would have been a thankless task on my part to have striven to convince him of his error. I busied myself with a jack instead. But there was positively not more solidity in his arm, strong enough it looked than there is in a bladder of lard, or a prime Yorkshire ham.

If this city merchant wished to acquire real muscle, he would have to begin at the beginning, by taking care of his health and getting in his bones." And still my friend is an obese man; not more so, at all events, than tens of thousands of people we see going about their occupations, and flattering themselves with the idea that, so long as they have something to show, they are in excellent health. Were men of this sort to attempt any strong exercise, such as an ordinary flight of stairs, the truth, I think, would soon manifest itself to them. Again, when such men are confined to the house for a few weeks with illness, how very quickly they go down-hill. This, for the simple reason that their bodies possess no staying power; for not only is the solidity of which they were erst so "mighty" nearly all fat, but the little which is left is ill-mixed, so to speak, is poor, worthless, flabby stuff, and can no more be compared to the hardy red muscle of your healthy spare man, than can a worsted thread to a telegraph wire.

Now how is a man to know when his muscles are in proper condition? Probing one's arm is hardly practicable. Well, I mean precisely to explain to you in what good muscle means, so that it will be as easy for you to tell it from the spurious article, as you can a silver half-crown from a pewter shilling.

But I may as well mention here that it is always a suspicious sign when a man weighs either much over or much under the standard of weight with reference to height. In persons, too, whose muscles are flabby and loaded with fat, you will usually find slight shortness of breath on exertion, clearly proving that the heart itself, which ought to be the strongest muscle in the body, partakes in some measure of the general deterioration.

I must now beg the reader kindly to follow me, while I give a very simple description of muscular tissue, which is simply flesh, to begin with—flesh apart from fat, remember. With the involuntarily muscles of the body, I have at present nothing to do. I deal at present with those muscles we voluntarily exercise. The biceps of the arm, which we all know, is a very good example of a simple voluntary muscle. In the middle there is the red fleshy part; at either end it is attached in strong fibrous tissue, which ends in tendons; these tendons are fastened, the lower in the forearm, the upper in the shoulder. Here we have, then, the tendinous being fixtures, it is evident that if we shorten by nervous force the centre or fleshy portion of the biceps, one of two things must happen either the forearm will be bent at the elbow, and the hand drawn towards the head, or, if the hand be clasping a beam overhead, the body will be drawn up towards this beam till the chin touches the hand. Now if we examine into the fleshy part of the biceps anatomically (or any other muscles, for that matter) we shall find it does not consist simply of a red homogeneous mass, but of a large collection of longitudinal fibres, joined together by a cobweb-like tissue, called the areolar or connective. In these you have only to bear in mind that the minute or ultimate fibres of the nerves, and the extreme ramifications of the blood-vessels, are spread out, the arteries conveying to them blood for their nourishment, and for that of the nerves which supply them with stimulus to action. The action of a muscle is to contract: in a state of contraction each individual fibre of the muscle is shortened, and being shortened is thickened, and the ends of the muscle are consequently drawn nearer to each together. Now, to produce a healthy contraction of any muscle, three things are required—first, the fibres of the muscle must have an average degree of bulk or substance in them—that is, they must not be attenuated; secondly, the muscle must not be clogged with fat, but possess merely enough of that substance around it to retain the animal heat; and thirdly, there must be a sufficient nervous force. Now, while on the one hand we know that good health is conjugate with a well-conditioned muscular system, it is pleasant on the other hand to remember that this is one of the best boons of us by a course of carefully regulated bodily exercise; and also that the custom of taking judicious daily exercise has been proved, beyond a doubt, to tend to longevity.

Let me endeavor, then, in a few words to explain to the reader what the conditions of healthful exercise generally are. In order to obtain good results from exercise, there are several things we must always bear in mind.

Exercise must be taken in moderation, and extend over some considerable time. "Spurts," and that amount of exercise which borders on fatigue, should be avoided. Whenever the body becomes tired, exertion, instead of being any longer of value as a tonic to the muscles, becomes a positive depressant, and results in evil not only to the muscular but to the nervous system as well.

A course of exercise, no matter what the kind of it is, ought to be begun and carried on by easy stages. Take the exercise of walking as an example. Here the strength should never be taxed, but the distance is to be increased day by day, till the person finds himself capable of performing a moderate journey in a reasonable time, and that distance ought to become his daily standard.

Do not forget that exercise is a tonic, and like all tonics, benefit is not to be expected from a single dose. Its effects are gradual; hence exercise should be taken with *regularity*. If you are a pedestrian, the same hour every day ought to find you enjoying your round of "pedal progression" and you must never, if possible, omit it the one day and take it the next. Look upon your daily walk as a duty, and let neither rain nor sunshine, snow nor hail, keep you from performing it. Of course, I am supposing myself addressing those in ordinary health, and even they ought to protect themselves from inclement weather. Only, pray don't patronise India rubber emporiums; also leave respirators to quiet repose in the chemist's shop window.

Never hurry your exercise. With the exception of getting out of the way of a mad bull, and one or two other odds and ends, everything of this world, is better done leisurely.

The time at which exercise should be taken is of the considerable importance. It ought to be, as nearly as possible, at the same time every day. One should never take hard exercise either immediately before or soon after a heavy meal. I should be inclined to Dr. Abernathy's advice, and say, "Wait for tuns hours after dinner."

Always take your exercise *in the open air*.

Exercise ought to be taken in clothes which are under too comfortable for hot weather; and, if taken in the intervals of rest, be very careful you do not catch cold.

Work is not exercise. This may seem strange, but it is true. I tell my patients, "I do not care how much you run about all day at your business you must take the exercise I prescribe quite independently of your work." There are perhaps no more hard-working men in the world than the Scottish ploughmen—wearily plodding all day long behind their horses, in wet weather or dry; no sooner, however, has the sun "gane west the loch," and the day's work is done, than, after supper (and a good "wauk" hearty meal it usually proves) in the glen, and not only for one, but often three good hours keep up the health-giving games for which their nation is so justly celebrated.

Finally, a paramount important that you should bear in mind what I am now going to say. Very kindly do so, reader, or I shall have written this paper in vain.

I have endeavored to show you that work is not exercise; and to your utmost, therefore, to prevent your exercise becoming work. If all that were expected of exercise were merely the increasing the bulk and firmness of the muscles, then a course of dumb-bells, and the performance of a few gymnastic feats daily, would be all that would be required. But proper exercise is meant not only to strengthen the muscles, but the nerves as well, and the brain and mind itself. Consequently your mind must go along with the exercise of the body. A long walk with a book will not do you one-half the good, but have with you a friend and with a genial friend would. My advice then is, choose what or which form of exercise you please; I do not care whether it be lawn-tennis, quoits, walking, or riding, but it must be something which interests you. *If you do your exercise as you would do penance, you are merely deceiving yourself.*

THE PROFESSOR'S BLUNDER.

The Herr Professor sat by an open window overlooking the Marktplatz. There came up a murmur of many voices, and the clash of a military band; but he heard them not, for his thoughts were far away. The Herr Professor was not old; on the contrary, he was young and handsome.

A knock came to the door. "Herr Michel's compliments, and has sent for an article for the next number."

The Professor turned over the papers on the table and snatching up a packet gave it to the printer's boy, who immediately vanished.

The following week Herr Professor Rittermann, found himself reading a paper with his signature attached to it. He did not remember writing it, and yet it was all finished in ink.

"I must have written it unconsciously whilst I was smoking," said the absent Herr Professor. "There is no one who would play such a trick upon me." And he was further confirmed in his opinion by a note from the editor, inclosing payment for his excellent Christmas paper. The Herr Professor rubbed his hands, and hummed a verse of an old ballad—

"And as he turned again homeward,
His sweetheart stood at the door,
Sigh and kiss upon them, my darling!
We see each other once more."

Yes, he should go home in a few days, and perhaps realise the joys he had depicted in the sketch, which was finished. Decided, an involuntary effort of the brain, the unconscious acting of the imaginative organ upon the pliable pen. At this moment the postman brought him a letter, which he opened and read as follows:—

"Mean, treacherous Honorat, do not think I can forgive such baseness. Nevermore will I see you or speak to you. Adieu for ever!
ANNCHEN."

"What have I done now?" said Professor Rittermann. "Is this another case of involuntary writing, and has my hand posted a letter whose contents I was not aware of?"

It was so near Christmas that the Professor did not answer the letter. He could make no explanation, simply because he knew of none to make.

"I will see Aennchen, and she will tell me what the letter means."

Aennchen and Fritz were at the door, watching the moon as it sailed through the fleecy clouds.

"Aennchen!" said the Herr Professor. But at the sound of his voice, she turned and fled.

"Fritz," said the perplexed lover, "what is the matter?"

"Come in, Fritz," cried Aennchen from the house.

Fritz here brought there a pipe, Fritz, the loveliest blue and gold, with a fair girl's face painted on it, fit to be thy heart's darling.

A slender figure darted from the house, and dashed the pipe to the ground, where it broke in pieces.

"Touch not his gifts, my brother; he is dishonest."

"Dishonest! Aennchen! Dishonest!" But the Herr Professor got no further in his speech. Aennchen drew Fritz into the house, and the door was closed; and Herr Honorat Rittermann went sorrowfully homeward.

The Herr Professor had a brave heart. He must see Frita when Aennchen was not by, and ask for some light upon the mystery.

"I don't believe it's anything," replied Fritz, when he was questioned; "and if you want to speak to Aennchen, come tonight when the rest have gone to the concert, and I will let you in."

"Thou art a good youth, Fritz," returned the Professor. "I have sent for another pipe for thee."

Aennchen was putting the last stitches into a pair of embroidered slippers.

"They were for Honorat," she murmured, "but he is so mean, so base."

"What have I done, Aennchen?"

Aennchen gave a slight scream, for the Professor was beside her; his hand was on her arm.

"What is it, Aennchen? At least, let me know of what I am accused?"

"My Christmas Festival, that I had written over and over again, that it might be quite perfect! and to think that those—Honorat, shouldst have robbed me of it and put thy name to it.—Oh, Honorat! —Honorat! how wouldst thou do it?"

The Herr Professor stood as one stunned.

"Thou canst not answer. Go! Go! and let me never see the more.—even although it breaks my heart." And Aennchen laid her head on the table, and sobbed pitifully.

"And didst thou indeed write it, Aennchen? Is my beauty darling, then, so charming a writer? I am glad that he no work of mine, yet I comprehended not. But now 'tis all being made clear. I see, I understand—thy packet (which I knew not was from thee) I gave it to the printer's boy, and he it was who put my signature to it. Aennchen, darling, we need not part. Thou wilt forgive my blunder. I held it to be involuntary brain-work; it was a mystery, a wonder."

"My Honorat!"

"My Aennchen!"

"Then must have the slippers, Honorat."

"And that will please my pet." Then the Herr Professor, fumbling in his pocket, and bringing therefrom a little basket, which he unfolded, and displayed a sibling golden ring.

There were heard merry voices quite without. In came Father Wennel and his wife, and the rest of his children. The Herr Professor rose up and said:

"There has been a blunder, but it is all cleared up; and Aennchen will be my wife if Father Wennel does not say nay."

"Amen!" said Father Wennel softly. "To-morrow is the blessed Christmas Eve, and is shall be the day of thy betrothal."

THE ATTRACTION OF MINERALS FOR MAN.

There is a somewhat pathetic story, ultimately vouched for, we believe, by the late Bishop Stanley (of Norwich), of a farmer of whom it was observed formed a most devoted and disinterested affection. The goose would follow him everywhere, climb into his lap at night, go shooting with him, climbing all the hedges, follow him when he was at the plough, turning deliberately at the end of every furrow, and walking back with him along the next, but not unfrequently turning to fasten its eyes upon him with the most intense gaze. The neighbors noticed that the head that this goose's mysterious love was ominous of some calamity, which he could avert by killing it, and shot it one day in a fit of alarm. That shower her little the man was touched by this curious demonstration of love for him and no doubt the last generation was less sensitive to the dumb pathos of such love than the present.

The view that all creatures beneath us are simply intended to serve our purposes, and that even their best love is of no more value than to amuse and gratify us, is still even more deeply rooted than the other notion that man played the same kind of part as puppets in the hands of the gods ever was to the heathen world. And yet is there not something in this capacity of love of the lower animals for man which ought to make us ashamed to regard it as a mere source of amusement?

To us the wistfulness and humility of that kind of love, and the touching and unpretentiousness when it discovers its own power —seem the only things which make the physical tie that, as actually exists between us, actually enjoy between even lower creatures and us, not a pot distasteful, but even beautiful. The power of loving is a kind of germinal power of resembling; for hearty loyalty and fidelity cannot exist without a degree of community of nature, however limited. And as there is nothing more mysterious than the unsolicited and unsolicited love of an inferior creature, so there is nothing which leaves a more distinct impression of the divine idea of creation on the mind. If a dumb creature can find no satisfaction but in the society of man, though it does not know in what man is superior to it, and feels our authority without feeling our fitness for it, there can hardly be superstition in the human feeling which in the same manner insists on a like tie to God.

The gratitude which domesticated animals feel to those who have enlarged their powers by a kind of education is a curious anticipation of human gratitude for the education is a curious anticipation of human gratitude for the education which theologians call probation and politicians the law of progress. That the affection, no less than the intelligence of the lower animals is capable of something far beyond their present grade, and that the pity and delight with which this affection is returned have so softening and humanizing an influence upon man, is surely a sufficient reason for admitting that civilization should include in its scope a much larger society than that of human beings. Indeed, we think it is hardly possible to enter heartily into the deeper feelings of the lower animals for ourselves without being carried on in piety, or, again, to be genuinely pious, without entering into the devoted affection of the lower animals for ourselves.

A SAD CASE.

The uncertainty of human affairs has a remarkable illustration in the case of James H. Elmore, at one time a wealthy New York merchant, whose death has just occurred at an insane asylum in Poughkeepsie, N. Y. He was engaged in business in New York, but at the outbreak of the oil excitement became interested in the celebrated Noble well, which brought him as easy fortune, and he retired about ten years ago, with a quarter of a million dollars, and established himself in a luxurious country-seat on Long Island. Disastrous speculations, including the building of a horse railroad on Long Island, led to a long series of law suits, in which Elmore's property was gradually melted up. He himself was stricken with paralysis; his daughter died, and on the announcement of an adverse decision in an important suit, his wife dropped dead upon the floor before him. The property had been signed to her, and as she left no will Elmore's life interest in the estate was sold, with all personal chattels, to satisfy judgments, and he and his two sons were cast out upon the world penniless and penniless. He traveled from place to place, a cripple, subsisting on the benevolence of sympathetic friends, until, on Christmas night a year ago, his eldest son was killed upon the Pennsylvania railroad. The unfettering intellect of the infirm old man gave way under this blow, and he was taken to the asylum where he died. His death affects a suit now pending, and saves to his remaining child, a minor son, a portion of the property on Long Island; but this is all that now remains of the handsome fortune with which James Elmore retired ten years ago.

Those persons who creep into the hearts of most people—who are chosen as the companions of their softer hours, and their relicfs from care and anxiety—are those possessed of shining qualities or strong virtues. It is rather the soft green of the soul on which we rest our eyes that are fatigued with beholding more glaring objects.

The detestable habit of talking of people rather than of things opens the way to abuses we might check with a word if we would. If the art of conversation were taught and encouraged as it should be, were we as far advanced in civilisation as we believe ourselves, we should write off the nine tenths of personality, and with it of a great deal of undeserved obloquy, and the burrowing destruction of small treacheries and unmeant dishonor.

THE JOY OF INCOMPLETENESS.

BY J. REDERMER.

If all our lives were one broad glare
Of sunlight, clear, unclouded,
If all our paths were smooth and fair,
By no soft gloom enshrouded;
If all life's flowers were fully blown
Without the sweet unfolding,
And happiness were wholly thrown
On hands too weak for holding—
Should we not miss the twilight hours,
The gentle haze and sadness?
Should we not long for storms and showers,
To break the constant gladness?

If none were sick and none were sad,
What service could we render?
I think if we were always glad,
We scarcely could be tender.
Did our beloved never need
Our patient ministration,
Earth would grow cold, and miss indeed
Its sweetest consolation;
If sorrow never claimed our heart,
And every wish were granted,
Patience would die, and faith depart—
Life would be disenchanted.

And yet in Heaven is no more night,
In Heaven is no more sorrow!
Such unimagined new delight
From grace from pain will borrow—
As the poor seed that, tempest-tossed,
Seeks its true life above it,
Nor knowing what it is, there be found
When sunbeams kiss and love it.
So we in darkness upward grow,
And look and long for Heaven,
But cannot picture it below,
Till more of light be given.

A DREAM
—OF—
SPRING.

Translated from the German of Johannes Van Dewall for the SATURDAY EVENING POST.

(This story was commenced in No. 29, Vol. 36. Back numbers can always be obtained).

CHAPTER XVII.

"I am sorry that I have given my almeha and slaves a holiday to-day," said Mr. Blunt, throwing himself at full length on the divan, "but you must be moderate, and content yourself with the Sultana!" with that he burst into a loud laugh.

No change whatever could be seen in Adda's face at this poke. She sank gracefully in Turkish fashion upon the silken cushions quite near me, and, easily leaning back, to my utter amazement conveyed with much deliberation, a small hooka to her rosy lips and smoked with a perfection, which showed frequent practice.

My perplexity may well be imagined, although it was not perceived by her. Now and then she smiled kindly at me or at Mahommed Effendi, who almost devoured her with his big, staring black eyes, but she did not speak a word and indeed if she had, her voice would have been lost in the noise Uncle Blunt and the two men, one at the piano, the other with the animals, were making.

I remarked above that nothing in this house should surprise me, therefore, leaning back comfortably upon the soft cushions I become a silent spectator of the dissolute, senseless pursuits of those three, although I was incapable of smiling at the little dog's distress, or at the malice and the tricks of the monkey. Sometimes I looked at Adda in her burlesque costume, which in the dim, variegated light, appeared less indecent; it seemed like a wild dream to see her in that odd position on the divan, smoking and smiling blankly at me, making friendly little signs at me. Innumerable thoughts made my head whirl.

If Aunt Ivernois had suddenly entered how astonished the old lady would have been—what pleasant things she would have said to Uncle Blunt, and how quickly she would have taken her little lost lamb by its collar and led it away! That was the reason why Margot was reserved in her communications about Adda, and this is what in this country they call *une femme du monde!*

The little negro boy interrupted my thoughts. Between his palms he carried in real Oriental fashion a fine trestle of silver filigree supporting a small cup, which contained strong, sweet coffee. He bowed and putting the latter on an ottoman at my side, he handed me his own chibouque with the golden Turkish tobacco, laid on the paste and lighted it.

I drank the coffee and began to smoke. The paste was strongly tinctured with opium. So the honourable Uncle Blunt smoked opium sometimes and had also taught his beautiful wife to like this poison to some degree. Thence her eyes shining as if with intoxication, hence, Uncle Blunt's flaccid, languid features and this peculiar narcotic odor, that filled the whole room, affecting my senses so strongly, hence finally this senseless amusement.

I really shrink from describing the absurd things these people were doing; the jokes in which they delighted. I should be charged with exaggeration—for they are beyond belief.

I began to feel very ill, an impatience, a wrath seized me, which I could scarcely restrain. Suddenly I rose and took my hat. Mrs. Blunt looked at me with astonishment.

"What are you doing?" she exclaimed, almost frightened.

"Mrs. Blunt, my time——" I began hesitatingly.

"Don't speak of time, is it possible that you want to leave us?" she interrupted eagerly and reproachfully, and she rose quickly from her divan to take the hat from my hands.

"Madam——,"

"But, indeed, you will take dinner with us; you will stay?"

With a sign she summoned assistance from her husband, who, moving with difficulty left his cushions and advanced with his ridiculous turban.

"Oh, we do not let you go—by Allah and the Prophets!" he stammered, skipping to and fro and laying hold of my arm.

"But, Mrs. Blunt, I am suffocating. I must have fresh air—this smoke, the opium! I beg to be excused!" I cried, entirely beside myself.

"Ah! the Turkish tobacco does not agree with him; he is not accustomed to it, ha! ha! Take him out, my pearl," laughed the old gentleman, and Adda grasping my hand, led me away.

"Come, *mon ami*, I'll take you into my room. You are right, this noise does make one dizzy. Among all those people I really have no comfort with you and yet we have so much to tell each other."

Abruptly turning in the open door, she exclaimed, cheerfully:

"*Salem aleikum*, gentlemen, *Salem aleikum, au revoir* at dinner! Play no silly tricks in my absence."

Without releasing my hand, she led me through a suite of rooms to one that was furnished with extreme luxury.

"There, now you will feel better—take a seat Charles, and let us have a nice little chat. But goodness, how I do look!" she cried, suddenly perceiving herself in the large mirror opposite her. She was embarrassed, blushed—yes, it is true, she blushed. "Excuse me a moment, Charles," and releasing my hand, she hastened out of the room.

I opened the window to let in the fresh air and sank into a fauteuil. My head dropped heavily into my hand. I was sick at heart. I tried hard to imagine that all this was nothing but a farce, a dream, a delusion, yet without success. I felt as if I were in a lunatic asylum.

O, Margot, how cruel it was to send me here! But my indignation overcame my grief.

What an abominable fool and good-for-nothing was this Uncle Blunt! Into what a shape had he molded that soft wax which was intrusted to him. How could he reconcile himself to the degradation of his beautiful young wife, drag her into the dust, confuse her conceptions of propriety and impropriety, till she had overstepped the barriers of noble womanhood and decency. And all this merely for pastime, to indulge his silly vanity!

I had known for a long time that Adda was without depth, without character, nothing but a superficial, indolent being; but would not the heart of any one bleed to see this beautiful creature under such care, to know, that she stood on such slippery, dangerous ground! Was it not inevitable in Paris, that Adda should stumble and fall at last into the abyss, so temptingly covered with flowers! Did not her own husband drive her to it?

"There, I am back again"—(I started from my painful thoughts)—"I hope to please you better now!" Adda exclaimed, gayly reentering the room and familiarly taking a seat by my side.

Her eyes begged for a compliment. My involuntary smile at this naivete, she apparently interpreted to her advantage. She had in her haste put on a négligé of blue cashmere, fastened only by a belt; its soft folds lightly enveloped her beautiful form and terminated in a long trail. She had laid aside the fez, wiped off the paint, and her long magnificent curls were simply tied back with a blue ribbon. The little feet in white silk stockings and high-heeled shoes, peeped coquettishly from under her skirt. Ten minutes had sufficed to bring about this change and make her look more charming now than ever.

This irresistible, sensual beauty, in part, perplexed me; every man would have been momentarily subject to its power.

After a few seconds, when she had sufficiently enjoyed the effect of her charms, she began:

"*Eh! bien, mon ami*, you feel better now, *n'est ce pas?*" With a deep sigh, and looking at me in a peculiar manner, she took my hand. "O, how glad I am, Charles, to have you back again after so long a separation. How much I have to tell you!"

Speaking thus, she leaned her head on my shoulder. I hardly dared to breathe, and silently permitted it. Her voice gradually grew softer and more enticing, her eyes shone with a moist, passionate brightness that I had never before observed.

"Charles," she went on, "how long it is since we—certainly you recollect this beautiful house in Dresden, do you not? We were only children then, don't you think so? But you were always so grave; how often you blamed me for being so imprudent. Do you still remember the moonlight evenings when we two walked up and down the garden paths? and dear aunty had not the remotest idea of the exquisite lecture you were reading me? Then, when on my birthday we stood on that rook in the darkness of night, all alone by the railing, and you kissed me, *mon ami!* O, how romantic that was! Our fate often proves so different from what we dreamed—life treats us so maliciously sometimes!"

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Without a word or motion, but with palpitating heart, I listened to her.

"By the way, Charles, you do not really think me happy? O, *mon Dieu!* I am not and never was. A young wife with such an old husband; it is really a shame! A thing like that should not be allowed."

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She clung to me and kissed me with passionate ardor. I felt as if her lips burned me. I endured it. I sat there cold, terrified, as if a viper was twining around me and gazed into an abyss. My heart ceased to beat. I was actually paralyzed for some minutes, my muscles, my limbs refused service. Finally I gained strength to free myself from the embrace of that unfortunate woman. I sprang up, pushed her back and fled away as if chased by furies.

Miserable, degraded being!

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The rumor was, the aunt added, that Adda, by command of her jealous husband, could wear only dark, high-necked dresses, like a Chatelaine of the fourteenth century, and that she had, with surprising quickness exchanged the light habits of a Parisian *femme du monde* for the strict manners of a Scotch gentlewoman; yes, her report closed, she had lost the slightest doubt, that the large mirror opposite her. She was embarrassed, blushed—yes, it is true, she blushed. "Excuse me a moment, Charles," and releasing my hand, she hastened out of the room.

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THE END.

MISS CAMERON'S LAST CHANCE.

BY OLIVE BELL.

Arthur Rochester was what the fashionable world called a "great catch." His family was one of the oldest and wealthiest in the county, his blood the regular patrician hue, and his character for morality and honor was said to be spotless.

Added to this, Mr. Rochester was the owner of a handsome face, a suave tongue, and a genial blitheness of manner, that won him hosts of friends. Match-making mamma's surfeited him with heavy dinners, and despairing belles practiced their arts on him in vain; for Mr. Rochester seemed to have the power to elude the most delusive nets, without making the fair anglers his enemies.

Rumor, however, was busy over his attentions to Miss Cameron, the only daughter of a prosperous merchant. Mr. Cameron occupied a handsome villa adjoining the Rochester homestead, and as a matter of course, the young people were often thrown into each other's society.

Belle Cameron was not in any sense a beauty. She possessed a pure pink-and-white complexion—a flower face, many graceful curls composed of soft yellow hair, and a pair of sparkling pale blue eyes, that lacked the expression that give so many faces a charm peculiar to themselves.

Arthur Rochester fancied himself a thorough judge of character, and Belle Cameron's flower-like face, was to him but a type of that inner beauty, which he fancied must be inherent, in every woman's nature. He held it as his chivalrous esteem—that is, the more gifted portion of the sex—and could not imagine how any creature with all the outer attributes of loveliness, could be otherwise than spotless within.

His attentions to Miss Cameron became so marked that they were often the subject of comment in Mr. Cameron's home. Mrs. Cameron for reasons best known to herself, was extremely anxious to see her daughter well settled in life. She urged Belle to encourage him.

"Encourage him?" yawned Belle, who had lounged down to a late breakfast in a soiled pink wrapper and ragged curl-papers. "How much farther can I go unless I boldly propose to him?"

Mrs. Cameron laughed softly.

"You will have to precipitate matters in some way, Belle."

"Why, mamma?"

"Your father's business affairs are growing more complicated every day. I do not see how he got into such a muddle!" growled Mrs. Cameron—a mature type of Belle—who never gave proxy John Cameron credit for more than average intelligence.

"Smarter men than papa get into muddles," said Belle resentfully, whose temper illy corresponded with the innocent purity of her face and who was just in the mood to declare a black crow white.

"Yes—yes," said Mrs. Cameron in a softer tone, "we all know he cannot help it, but it is done; and if you do not catch a husband this season you will have to do without."

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The object of this subtle remark entered the room at that moment. A slender girl of twelve, tall of her age, with a sharp, dark face, and large black eyes that met Belle's orbs of blue unflinchingly.

"Good morning, Miss Cameron; "up to my room and put away my jewels—mind, don't pocket any——"

"I'm not a thief!" put in Nell, with a flash of her black eyes.

"Then fill the parlor vases with fresh flowers—roses and lilies. Mr. Rochester thinks they typify my modesty and purity," said Belle with a sneer.

"You're more like a thistle!" said Nell in a low tone, slowly backing out of the room.

"You young rebel!" cried Belle, making a dash at the child with a butter knife, "I'll teach you how to talk to me."

Nell eluded the blow and skipped upstairs with a laugh that set Miss Belle's nerves to quivering.

"How that child does provoke me!" she said, as she seated herself at the table. "I do not see what induced papa to give her a home."

"You would'nt fancy your own cousin in the almshouse, would you? Her mother was all the sister your father had."

"She might have had more sense than to marry a beggar and leave her child a burden to us," grumbled Belle. "I cannot bear to have her about; she's dangerous."

"Yes, Nell has a bad habit of speaking the truth," said Mrs. Cameron, going to a window that overlooked the lawn.

"Why, Belle," she exclaimed in consternation; "there she is, talking to Arthur Rochester."

Belle Cameron gave the couple on the lawn a glance of mute dismay, then flew up to her room to dress for Mr. Rochester's rather premature morning call.

"If Nell should happen to expose me!" she murmured, as she dressed her yellow hair in a flutter of nervous dread. "I think I will be more gentle with the little ingrate in future. There is no telling what harm she might do me."

Half an hour later she floated into the parlor arrayed like a fairy let loose from the land of the Perris. Her pale pink robes, a shade deeper than the tea roses in her yellow braids, were a marvel of simplicity and taste, and the expression of her delicately-tinted face would have done credit to an angel. She found Mr. Rochester engaged in assisting Nell to arrange the flowers in the costly vases.

"Belle is such a thoughtful child," she said sweetly, whose face expressed the amazement she felt. "Nellie, dear, go out for a romp."

"A what?"

"A play on the lawn—you stupid dear," Belle's laugh rang out clear and musical, as she gently pushed Nell through the open door.

"Gracious!" came back in a muffled undertone, as Nellie Verner disappeared, "she has got good awful sudden."

Belle flushed and bit her lip with vexation, as she glanced slyly at Rochester's impassive face. He looked as innocent and confiding as an infant, however, and talked long and earnestly to Belle for his faith in her was boundless.

Hitherto, Mr. Rochester had let no thoughts of love ruffle the placidity of his friendship with Belle Cameron. True he did admire her above all others—a woman whose sensitive nature would revolt at anything cruel, unjust, or deceitful, and whose disposition was a charming compound of amiability and good common sense.

But on this particular morning, Belle looked so bright and bewitching in the delicate robes that rivaled the rosebloom on her smooth cheeks, and spoke so kindly and considerately of the little orphan, Belle Verner, that he fancied he might one day cherish her with a deeper feeling than friendship, and drew a rapid mental sketch of the happiness that would beautify his life, should he place this graceful and refined young girl at the head of his household.

Yet in spite of Belle's smiles and blushes, he withheld the words that were to act the seal of misery or happiness on his future life, and contented himself by ending his call with a few flattering words that set Belle's expectant heart into a flutter of hope. Weeks rolled on, and unexpected affairs kept Mr. Rochester absent in a distant city. Belle was in a fever of dread and despair, for her father's business affairs were daily growing more complicated. The suspense did not soften Belle's temper any, but rather added something to its rashness. She pouted, scolded, and stormed alternately, and contrived to make herself and family miserable.

"Belle," said her mother one evening, "have you heard the news?"

"What news?" Belle looked up from the book she was moping over, and saw her mother's generally placid face considerably troubled. "You know Mr. Rochester has been absent for a few weeks?"

"Yes." Belle looked interested.

"Well, he returned this morning, and brought with him——"

"A wife," interrupted Belle, with a nervous cry.

"No, thank goodness! Not a wife, but two orphans—the children of some penniless relative, to make you miserable for life." Mrs. Cameron spoke as if Belle's marriage was an assured fact, utter oblivious that Nell Verner's sharp ears were greedily taking in her words.

"Don't fret about me, mamma," Belle said with a sneer. "When I marry Rochester, his poor relations will never trouble my peace of mind."

"But he has adopted them—two little girls," sighed Mrs. Cameron.

"What of that? He will have to find some other home for them. I would not tolerate them."

"Do go and dress, Belle," said Mrs. Cameron, with a glance at her daughter's untidy garments, "the will be sure to call this evening."

Belle arose lazily, and gazed down the long elm-shaded avenue that separated her own home from the Rochester mansion. She could see its tall white chimneys, looming up to the opaline evening sky, see the lights dancing hither and thither, as the servants lit up the grand old rooms, and hear bursts of childish laughter behind the vines that sheltered the wide parlors. And her heart grew strangely hard and bitter towards the children she had never seen, as she went slowly up to her room.

"Some men have queer fancies," she muttered, in a pettish way. "Love of children is one of Rochester's strongest; but I'll soon cure him of that."

A few moments later Nell Verner's selfish black eyes lit up with a gleam of mingled gladness and triumph, as Mr. Rochester came leisurely down the elm-shaded avenue.

He was thinking of Belle Cameron, and of the pleasure that would come into her sky-blue eyes when he would ask her to fill a mother's place to the little orphans Providence had thrown in his way. She was good, pure, and gentle, he thought; just the woman to rear children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and he had promised their own dying mother that her children should be given a training and education, that would be a safeguard to them, and should they be cast on the charity of less kindly hearts than his own.

"Oh, Mr. Rochester!"

Little Nellie Verner's claw-like fingers clasped his, as he reacted her hiding-place, and rather abruptly broke up his pleasant train of thought.

"Why Nellie!" He laid his hand on the black head. "What brought you out in the dampness?"

For a heavy dew was falling, and the twilight was growing purplish.

"You know two little girls at your house?" questioned Nellie, looking eagerly in his pleasant face.

"Yes, two dear children. How did you know?"

"Aunt Amelia told Belle you had brought two children home to make her miserable for life."

"To make who miserable?" Mr. Rochester said in amazement. "Your Aunt Amelia?"

"No sir," chuckled Nell. "Belle, she said when you married her your poor relations wouldn't trouble her; and she wouldn't either if she thumped them around like she does me."

Mr. Rochester's amusement was too deep for words. Why, he had never asked the girl to marry him!

"Is she unkind to you?" he said slowly.

"She's just hateful," said Nell, clasping his fingers tighter. "She beats me when she gets mad at you for not marrying her, for you know Uncle John's going to fail. I'd rather see you dead, though."

Nellie's simplicity was too real to be untrue, and Mr. Rochester turned away with a heavy sigh. If something would only occur to verify the child's words?

Nellie had scampered back to the house, and Rochester slowly followed her, walking under the deep shadow of the elms.

"There you are at last!" he heard a sharp voice say, as Nell crossed the threshold. "I'll teach you to run off when I am dressing. You know I added curls for my hair."

And Mr. Rochester gazed blankly at the angel in white who gave the little orphan such a vigorous shaking.

It is needless to say Belle Cameron went into oblivion—and poverty with the broken-down old father, who found Nellie Verner a youthful but cheering comforter.

* * *

We have been a prudent, industrious wife retrieve the fortunes of a family, when her husband pulled at the other end of the rope.

FOOD FOR COLD WEATHER.

Certain dishes are especially adapted for cold weather, and at the present season of the year we may call attention to some of them. First, however, it may not be amiss to consider on what general principles one kind of food is adapted for hot countries, and another for cold. The first principle is to remember that in cold weather, we require *fat*. Fat and grease contain a large quantity of carbon, and this carbon when it and absorbed into the system keeps up the animal heat.

There is an old story told that many years ago, when the streets of London were lighted with oil lamps, before the introduction of gas, Russian sailors in England were in the habit of climbing to the lamps and drinking the lamp-oil. It is also asserted that in some of the Arctic regions the sailors have boiled down and eaten the tallow candles.

Whether these stories are true or not, may be left an open question, but there is no doubt that the food craved for, was that best suited to sustain heat. We all know how invaluable a remedy cod-liver oil has proved for many invalids, especially among young children; and how medical men often recommend cod-liver oil to delicate persons, to be taken during the winter, and left off on the return of warm spring weather.

Of all articles of food, perhaps none is so suitable for cold weather as that known vulgar dish, pea-soup. Persons who affect to despise pea-soup, should remember that it is one of the most variable soups ever made. Poor pea-soup, which really owes almost its whole goodness to the split peas from which it is made, is indeed poor stuff for epicures, though a very cheap and wholesome food for persons not rich, or for the poor. Good pea-soup is an exceedingly delicious compound, and we will describe how to make it.

First of all, one great advantage of pea-soup is that a gr ay stock, scarcely adapted to make any other kind of soup, is really best suited for the purpose. For instance, the water in which a large piece of pickled pork has been boiled, or even the greasy water in which ham or bacon has been boiled, is admirably adapted for making pea-soup. As a rule, the water used for boiling salt beef is too salt to be used for making soup; however, very often by soaking a piece of salt beef in fresh water for twenty-four hours before boiling it, the liquor left will be found to be not too salt for making soup—the water, of course, remembering that no further salt is added.

We will suppose, therefore, that some stock, or rather some greasy liquor, has been left, say 3 quarts. For a family of 12, I would here suggest that the water in which, say, a piece of fresh silver-side of beef has been boiled, should be used again to boil a good sized piece of bacon, that may be stewed with it. To this add some roast fowls, that which is left forming a cold breakfast dish. First of all, take a quart of split peas, and put them in a large basin, and let them soak in fresh water for nearly a day, a little piece of soda rather bigger than a pea being put into the water to render it softer. Should any of the peas float on the water, take them off, and throw them away. Next, strain off the water, and put them in the greasy stock mentioned, to boil, adding to the two quarts of liquor, one good-sized head of celery, four good-sized onions, two carrots, two turnips, and a little parsley. Let all this boil till the whole is thoroughly soft, occasionally skimming the soup, taking off that nasty thick film of fat which will sometimes rise to the surface. When the peas are thoroughly soft, strain the whole through a wire sieve into a large basin; pick out the stalk of the parsley, and with a good-sized wooden spoon rub the whole through the wire sieve.

This is the great secret of good soup. Too often the cook will not take the trouble to send the whole through the sieve. It is undoubtedly a troublesome affair, and very apt to make the wire sieve dirty, however, the result well repays the trouble, and the cook generally can call some one to her assistance to take a turn with the spoon. It will also be found convenient now and then to moisten the ingredients in the sieve with some of the liquor that has run through; this rather helps the process. Now soup made on the basis which the liquor of celery, the onions, the carrots, the turnips are all sent through the sieve, as well as the peas, is a very different affair from soup made in a very different affair from soup made in a very different affair from soup made in

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WHAT TO DO WITH BOYS.

What to do with boys, is one of the problems that occupies the thoughts of parents for many an anxious hour. Right decision of the question has given many the start in life which has led to eminence, perhaps a far greater number by mistaken judgment have heavily weighted the young man for his future career.

The decision should not be made arbitrarily. It is greatly unwise to fix upon some calling or profession merely because it seems to be a desirable one. The law, the ministry and medicine are overrun with incompetents who were destined to their profession because fond parents thought the calling respectable and remunerative.

The first point to be determined is, has the boy any special natural talent or aptitude which indicates what he can do best. If he have such a bias, nature has decided in advance the work for which he is intended. It will be cruelty to thwart the bent of his disposition, provided, of course it be in a healthful direction. Better an enthusiastic mechanic than a drudge of a professional man, whatever the wealth of the parents. His own life will be easier, fuller of enjoyment, and his influence for good incomparably greater than they could become in any calling repugnant to him.

But the average boy shows a natural predilection for no work. He would be content without any trade or business if circumstances would permit his idleness. It is almost a fatal error to allow such a choice to be made. Work is the price of manhood. Insist upon it that the boy do something for himself; that he earn a living, no matter though he is to become a millionaire by inheritance. In such a case he will need more than ever to learn the worth of money and how to take care of it, by having learned how much a dollar costs.

Ordinarily, however, it is a blessed necessity that the boy shall make his own way in the world. Let him enter upon the first opening that presents itself where he can have a fair opportunity, and teach him to do his best in it. If he be encouraged to faithfulness, his time for advancement and wider opportunity will surely come. Everybody is on the lookout for young men with steady purpose and honest industry, and these can be made habitual in any respectable calling.

PRIZES IN SCHOOLS.

If the business of a teacher were to get as much knowledge as possible in a given time into the mind of the pupil, many expedients now resorted to, would be commendable. But such is not his proper work; any more than it is the right course for a nurse to force the greatest possible amount of food into the child's stomach. Her calling is to rear the child; to so minister to his physical wants, that he shall increase in stature and in strength. The teacher's true work is to aid in developing the mental powers; to make the boy more eager for knowledge, quicker of apprehension and a more cogent reasoner.

Stimulation by prizes retards rather than forwards the proper work of education. It is a practical way of saying to the boy "the rewards of learning are insufficient; it is a task for which extra compensation is to be awarded." The pupil's thoughts are fixed on the medal; he strives for that, and the lessons are considered important only as a means to the coveted end. It is wrong in principle and injurious in practice.

The young are eager to learn; they are never tired of making new discoveries suited to their limited capacities. They are always ready with questions on subjects within their ken. It is for the skillful teacher to guide this natural appetite for instruction; to keep it healthful and active by carefully presenting proper subjects for the child's thought, by teaching him to investigate for himself, to enlarge his sphere of search, and to let him enjoy the proper rewards of such investigation in the pleasure which each new discovery brings. A boy trained in this way does not need the stimulus of the medal or of the birch. So long as he really desires to know, he will exert himself to find out: if he have not an appetite for the mental food presented, it will only sicken him and dwarf his powers, to crowd it down his unwilling apprehension sugared over with rewards, or to force it there by punishment.

Appeals to ambition will cultivate the spirit of ambition, they will not develop love of learning; and vanity and love of superiority which are the motives usually addressed in prize-giving, are not so dormant in the nature of most children as to need special stimulus.

We would unhesitatingly banish the prize and the rod from every schoolroom, and rely upon the method indicated by the nature of the child. It may not show as immediate results, or present so attractive a display on examination days, but the gain will be sure, and when the real test of power comes in practical life, the boy will pass the prize-takers with ease, on the road to success.

A THEOLOGICAL QUESTION.

"Ever since Eve ate the apple——"

We object. That apple has been thrust down the throats of people long enough. It may be heresy not to swallow it; if so, then here goes for heterodoxy and new light.

This is not a battle on behalf of Eve; everybody knows she was tempted and yielded; that her descendants have proved their legitimacy by going and doing likewise, and that they have done it so long that they love to do it. In fact we have all come to love Eve for giving us so good an excuse for enjoying our sins, although it is not, perhaps, just the thing to own up in this fashion: but this is not a fashion article; it relates to a fruit.

We know very well that apples are no contemptible fruit; that they exhibit very tempting qualities in their very young applehood. An average boy will walk further, climb higher, lie harder, and tempt providence generally with greater recklessness in pursuit of green apples, than for almost any other delight.

Perhaps the theory of the original unfortunate apple-eating took its rise from this very fact, supposing that the peculiar fascination of the fruit has descended with its other qualities.

But remember, Eve was no boy; bear in mind too that the apples of olden time were but the faintest hints of possibilities.

As described by Pliny, one of the earliest naturalists, the apple was a small fruit growing on a thorn bush, answering to our wild thorn apple. The glorious Summer Bough, a golden globe of perfumed sunshine, the rich Baldwin, luscious Spitzenberg, tempting Greening, melting Swaar; these were then only dreams of the future, indulged by some daring poet of a thorn bush catching its inspiration from the fragrance of its own blossoms of a May morning, to be wrought out by centuries of culture. Had Eve once tasted the original apple, Adam, warned by her sad grimaces would have fled in terror.

Don't ask, "what fruit was it then, if not the apple?" We do not pretend to be wiser than the Scriptures which leave the question unanswered. Our task ends with relieving the apple from the groundless obloquy which fanciful theology has cast upon it, and a warning against hastily accepting unfavorable conclusions from unsustained assertions.

THE ART OF PUTTING THINGS.

Spoiled in cooking or in the serving, is the fate of many an otherwise toothsome dish. A juicy roast on a greasy dish, or steaming joints fit for an epicure, placed on a table covered with an uncleanly cloth, lose half their attractiveness; the attention of any but a gross feeder is fastened upon the repulsive feature of the entertainment, and his appetite weakens.

It is only when all the senses harmonize that any one of them can be used with fullness of pleasure. The palate loses enjoyment if the eye be offended; music is less attractive in an apartment where noisome odors prevail; pictures fail to please in presence of discordant sounds. The attention is distracted, the perceptions are confused, and in the mixture of pleasurable and disagreeable sensations, the latter unpleasantly assert themselves.

These facts are of wide application, extending beyond the mere gratification of the senses, although they are well worth considering in this relation alone, so much enjoyment in life depends on their exercise. In the external and internal fitting-up of the homestead they are especially worthy of attention. A cheerful approach to the door; a pleasing impression made by a neat inviting looking hall; furniture, drapery and ornaments properly and harmoniously arranged, will heighten the joys of love itself in the household. Who can be thoroughly satisfied, when a glance through the window reveals details of the family washing, ruins of superannuated stoves and the horrors of the garbage-box in the adjacent yard? Everybody can recall some unpretending cottage, where by simple harmony of surroundings and appointments, more of brightness was diffused than could be imparted by the most dazzling display of mere wealth.

In the same direction lies the secret of dressing attractively. Neatness and harmony are at the foundation of all true taste. A highly-colored necktie may give a loud appearance to a whole sober suit; the peeping out of a slovenly skirt will destroy the effect of the richest toilette.

Equally applicable is this principle to the way of doing things. The "No" of a kind-hearted man whose manner is inspired by his goodness, is less offensive than the gruff or snappish "yes" of a boor. Truth may be fired at a man in such a way as to arouse his anger, or it may be calmly presented so as to win his attention and acquiescence. In short, the way of doing it, may deform the best action, and any and all things are most effective when properly presented.

THE TREE OF TIME.

BY CHARLES S. LARNED.

As the days fall off from the tree of Time,
To lie in the West like gold,
Our forms beneath its shade divine,
At last sit gray and old.

To look upon the earth with eyes
Which only see how bare
The deadened boughs to memories
Of Spring's bright blooming year!

'Twas then the little laughing child,
Caught first its birth's glad day;
Fluttering down with zephyrs mild,
In one gold leaf at play!

In bloom of summer fell the fruit,
From Time's young tree for life—
A maiden charmed by Love's low lute,
Walked youth's sweet blushing wife!

Those lived to watch the changing leaves,
But died in that last night
Which saw them cluster round the graves,
A hoar the trees' lone site!

The tree of Time, although so fair,
Must here but grow to die,
Yet blooms it ever green up there—
In gardens mid the sky!

HER LAST APPEARANCE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET."

CHAPTER I.

HER TEMPTATION.

"He is a scoundrel," said the gentleman.

"He is my husband," answered the lady.

Not a word in either sentence, yet both came from bursting hearts and lips passionpale.

"Is that your answer, Barbara?"

"The only answer God and man will suffer me to give you."

"And he is to break your heart—and squander your earnings on his low vices—keep you shut up in this shabby lodging while all the town is raving about your beauty and your genius—and you are to have no redress, no escape?"

"Yes," she answered with a look that thrilled him; "I shall escape him—in my own time. My wrongs will have redress—at the Day of Judgment."

"Barbara, he is killing you."

"Don't you think that the greatest kindness he has ever shown me?"

The gentleman began to pace the room distractedly. The lady turned to the tall narrow glass over the chimney-piece, with a curious look, half-mournful, half-scornful. Not a trace was there of the beauty which was said to have set the town raving.

What did that tarnished mirror show her? A small pale face, wan and wasted by studious nights and many burdens of care, dark shadows about dark eyes, but such eyes! They seemed, in this cold light of day, too black and large and brilliant for the small white face; but at night, in the theatre, with the flash of rouge under them, and the light of genius burning in them, they were the most dazzling, soul-emanating eyes man had ever seen: or so said the magnificent, Horace Walpole among them; and Mrs. Barbara Stowell was the last fashion at Covent Garden Theatre.

It was only her second season on those famous boards, and her beauty and talent had set the town wild with delight. The town had never seen her by daylight. She never drove in the Ring, or appeared at a fashionable auction, or mystified her admirers at a masquerade in the Pantheon, or drank whey in St. James's Park—in a word, she went nowhere—and the town had invented twenty stories to account for this secluded existence. But not one had guessed the truth, which was sadder than the most dismal fiction that had floated down the idle stream of London gossip. Barbara Stowell kept aloof from the world for three reasons only, because her husband was a tyrant and a ruffian, and left her without a sixpence—secondly, because her heart was broken—thirdly, because she was dying.

This last reason was only known to herself. No stethoscope had sounded that aching breast—no stately physician, with eyeglass and gold-headed cane, and chariot and footman, had been called in to testify in scientific terms to the progress of the destroyer—but Barbara Stowell knew very well that her days were numbered, and that her span of life was of the briefest.

She was not in the first freshness of her youth. Three years ago she had been a country parson's daughter, leading the peacefullest, happiest, obscurest life in a Hertfordshire village—when, as ill-luck would have it, she came to London to visit an aunt who was in business there as a milliner, and at this lady's house met Jack Stowell, an actor of small parts at Covent Garden—a handsome fellow with a fine person, a kind of surface cleverness which had a vast effect upon simple people, and ineffable conceit. He had the usual idea of the unsuccessful actor, that his manager was his only enemy, and that the town was laughing to see him play Romeo, and Douglas, and the whole string of youthful heroes. His subordinate position soured him; and he drowned his sorrows in drink and play, and was about as prodigate a specimen of his particular genus as could be found in the purlieus of Bow Street. But he knew how to make himself agreeable in society, and passed for a "mighty pretty fellow." He had the art of being sentimental too on occasion, could cast up his eyes to heaven and affect a mind all aglow with honor and manly feeling.

Upon this whited sepulchre Barbara wasted the freshness of her young life. He was caught by her somewhat singular beauty, which was not that of an old Italian picture than of a rustic Englishwoman. Beauty so striking and peculiar would make its mark, he thought. With such a Juliet he could not fail as Romeo. He loved her after his fashion, and without heart was capable of loving, and he foresaw his own advantage in marrying her. So, with a little persuasion and a great many sweet speeches out of the British Drama, he broke down the barriers of duty, and wrung from the tearful, blushing girl a hasty consent to a Fleet marriage, which was solemnized before she had time to repent that weak moment of concession.

The milliner was angry, for she had believed Mr. Stowell her own admirer, and, although too wise to think of him as a husband, wished to retain him as a suitor. The parson was furious, and told his daughter she had taken the first stage to everlasting destruction without his knowledge, and might go the rest of the way without his interference. She had a step-mother who was very well disposed to widen the breach, and she saw little hope of reconciliation with a father who had never erred on the side of fondness. So she began the world at twenty years of age, with Jack Stowell for her husband and only friend. In the first flush and glamor of a girlish and romantic love, it seemed to her sweet to have him only, to have all her world of love and hope bound up in this one volume.

This fond and foolish dream lasted less than a month. Before that moon which had shone a pale crescent in the fair summer sky of her wedding night had waxed and waned, Barbara knew that she was married to a drunkard and a gambler, a brute who was savage in his cups, a profligate who had lived amongst degraded women until he knew not what womanly purity meant, a wretch who existed only for self-gratification, and whose love for her had been little more than the fancy of an hour.

He lost no time in teaching her all he knew of his art. She had real genius, was fond of study, and soon discovered that he knew very little. She had her own ideas about all those heroines of which he only knew the merest conventionalities and traditions. She sat late into the night studying, while he was drinking and punting in some low tavern. Her sorrows, her disappointments, her disgusts, drove her to the study of the drama for consolation and temporary forgetfulness. Those heroines of tragedy, who were all miserable, seemed to sympathize with her own misery. She became passionately fond of her art before ever she had trodden the stage.

Jack Stowell took his wife to Rich, and asked for an engagement. Had Barbara been an ordinary woman, the manager would have given her a subordinate place in his troupe, and a pittance of twenty shillings a week. But her exceptional beauty struck the managerial eye. He had half-a-dozen geniuses in his company, but their good looks were on the wane. This young face, these Italian eyes, would attract the town—and the town had been leaning a little towards the rival house lately.

"I'll tell you what, Stowell," said the manager, "I should like to give your wife a chance. But to take any hold upon the public, she must appear in a leading part. I couldn't trust her till she has learnt the A B C of her profession. She must try her success in the provinces."

They were standing at noontide on the great stage at Covent Garden. The house was almost in darkness, and the vast circle of boxes shrouded in linen wrappings had a ghostly look that chilled Barbara's soul. What a little space he seemed to herself in that mighty arena! Could she ever stand there and pour out her soul in the sorrows of Juliet, or the Duchess of Malfi, or Isabella, as she had done once before the lookinglass in her dingy lodging?

"Jack," she said, as they were walking home—he had been unusually kind to her this morning—"I can't tell you what an awful feeling that great, dark, cold theatre gave me. I felt as if I was standing in my tomb."

"That shows what a little goose you are," retorted Jack contemptuously; "do you think anybody is going to give you such a big tomb as that?"

Mrs. Stowell appeared at the Theatre Royal, Bath, and tried her wings, as the manager called it, with marked success. There could be no doubt that she had the divine fire, a genius and bent so decided, that her lack of experience went for nothing—and then she worked like a slave, and threw her soul, mind, heart—her whole being—into this new business of her life. She lived only to act. What else had she to live for, with a husband who came home tipsy three or four nights out of the seven, and whose infidelities were notorious?

She came to London the following winter, and took the town by storm. Her genius, her beauty, her youth, her purity, were on every tongue. She received almost as many letters as a prime minister in that first season of success—but it was found out in due time that she was inaccessible to flattery, and the fops and fribbles of her day ceased their persecutions.

Among so many who admired her and so many who were eager to pursue, there was only one who discovered her need of pity and pitied her.

This was Sir Philip Hazlemere, a young man of fashion and fortune—neither fop nor fribble—but a man of cultivated mind and intense feeling.

He saw, admired, and, ere long, adored the new actress—but he he did not approach her, as the others did, with fulsome letters which insulted her understanding, or costly gifts which offended her honor. He held himself aloof, and loved in silence—for the instinct of his heart told him that she was virtuous. But he was human, and his sense of honor could not altogether stifle hope. He found out where she lived, bought over the lodging-house keeper to his interest, and contrived to learn a great deal more than the world uninformed knew about Barbara Stowell.

He was told that her husband was a wretch, and ill-used her; that this brilliant beauty, who shone darkled by night like a star, was by daylight a wan and faded woman, haggard with sorrow and tears. If he had loved her before, when the history of her life was unknown to him, he loved her doubly now, and, taking hope from all that made her life hopeless, flung honor to the winds and determined to win her.

Could she be worse off, he asked himself, than she was now—the slave of a drunken profligate—the darling of an idle, gaping crowd—scorned and neglected at home, where a woman should be paramount? He was rich and his own master—there was all the bright, glad world before them. He would take her to Italy, and live and die there for her sake, content and happy in the blessing of her sweet companionship. He had never spoken of love to her, and spoken to her; but he had lived for the last six months only to see and hear her, and it seemed to him that he knew every thought of her mind, every impulse of her heart. Had he not seen those lovely eyes answer his fond looks sometimes, as he hung over the stage box, and the business of the scene brought her near him, with a tender intelligence that told him she understood?

If John Stowell should sue for a divorce, so much the better, thought Philip. He could then make his beloved Lady Hazlemere, and let the world say what it would—the glory of his life. He was so deeply in love that he thought it would be everlasting renown to have won Barbara. He would go down to posterity famous as the husband of the loveliest woman of his time; like that Duke of Devonshire, of whom the world knows so little except that he had a beautiful Duchess.

One day Sir Philip Hazlemere took courage, emboldened by some new tale of Jack Stowell's brutality—and got himself introduced to the presence of his beloved. She was shocked at first, and very angry; but his deep respect melted her wrath, and for the first time in her life Barbara learnt how reverential, how humble, real love is. It was no bold seducer who had forced himself into her presence, but a man who pitied and honored her, and who would have deemed it a small thing to shed his blood for her sake.

He was no stranger to her, though she had never heard his voice till to-day. She had seen him in the theatre—night after night—and had divined that it was some stronger feeling than love of the drama which held him riveted to the same spot, listening to the same play, however often it might be repeated in the shifting repertoire of those days.

She knew that he loved her, and that earnest look of his had touched her deeply. What was it now for her, who had never known a good man's love, to hear him offer the devotion of a lifetime, and she humbly, at her permission to carry her away from a life which was most abject misery!

Her heart thrilled as she heard him. Yes, this was true love—this was the glory and grace of life which she had missed. She could measure the greatness of her loss, now that it was too late. She saw what pitiful tinsel she had mistaken for purest gold. But, though every impulse of her heart drew her to this devoted lover, honor spoke louder than feeling, and made her marble. On one only point she yielded a little to her lover's pleading. She did not refuse him permission to see her again. He might come sometimes, but it must be seldom, and the hour in which he should forget the respect due to her as a true and loyal wife would be the hour that parted them forever.

"My life is so lonely!" she said, self-excusingly, after having accorded this permission; "it will be a comfort to me to see you now and then, for a brief half-hour, and to know that there is some one in this great busy world who pities and cares for me."

She had one reason for granting Sir Philip's prayer, which would have well-nigh broken his heart could he have guessed it. This was her inward conviction that her life was near its close. There was hardly time for temptation between the present hour and the grave. And every day seemed to carry her further from the things and thoughts of earth. Her husband's cruelties stung less keenly than of old—his own degradation, which had been the heaviest part of her burden, seemed further away from her—as if he and she lived in different worlds. Her stage triumphs, which had once intoxicated her, now seemed unreal as the pageant of a dream. Yes, the ties that bind this weak flesh to earthly joys and suffering were gradually loosening. The fetters were slipping off this weary clay.

CHAPTER II.

HER AVENGER.

Sir Philip showed himself not undeserving Barbara's confidence. He came to the sordid London lodging—a caravanserai which had housed wandering tribes of shabby-genteel adventurers for the last twenty years, and whose dingy panelling seemed to exhale an odor of poverty. He brought his idol hot-house flowers and fruits—the weekly papers—those thin little leaflets which amused our ancestors—a new book now and then—and the latest news of the town—that floating gossip of the clubs, which Walpole was writing to Sir Horace Mann. He came and sat beside her, as she worked at her embroidery frame, and cheered her by a tenderness too reverent to alarm. In a word, he made her happy.

If she were slowly fading out of life, he did not see the change or guess that this fair flower was soon to wither. He saw her too frequently to perceive the gradual progress of decay. Her beauty was of ethereal type, to which disease lent new charms.

One day he found her with an ugly bruise upon her forehead; she had tried to conceal it with the loose ringlets of her dark hair, but the quick eye saw the mark. When pressed hard by his solicitous questioning, she gave a somewhat lame account of the matter. She had been passing from the sitting-room to her bed-chamber last night, when a gust of wind extinguished her candle, and she had fallen and wounded herself against the edge of the chest of drawers. She crimsoned and faltered as she tried to explain this accident.

"Barbara, you are deceiving me!" cried Sir Philip. "It was a man's clenched fist left that mark. You shall not live with him another day."

And then came impassioned pleading which shook her soul—fond offers of a sweet glad life in a foreign land—a divorce—a new marriage—honor—station.

"But dishonor first," said Barbara. "Can the path of shame ever lead to honor? No, Sir Philip, I will not do evil that good may come of it."

No eloquence of her lover's could move her from this resolve. She was firm as the Bass Rock, he passionate as the waves that beat against it. He left her at last, burning with indignation against her tyrant.

"God keep and comfort you," he cried at parting. "I will not see you again until you are free."

These words startled her, and she pondered them, full of alarm. Did he mean any threat against her husband? Ought she to warn Jack Stowell of his danger?

* * * * *

Sir Philip Hazlemere and Jack Stowell had never yet crossed each other's path. The surest place in which not to find the husband was his home. But now Sir Philip was seized with a sudden fancy for making Mr. Stowell's acquaintance—or at any rate for coming face to face with him in some of his favorite haunts. These were not difficult to discover. He played deep and he drank hard, and his chosen resort was a disreputable tavern in a narrow street out of Long Acre, where play and drink were the order of the night, and many a friendly festivity had ended in a bloody brawl.

Here on a December midnight, when the pavements about Covent Garden were greasy with a thaw, and the link boys were reaping their harvest in a thick brown fog, Sir Philip went directly the play was over, taking one Captain Montagu, a friend and confidant, with him. A useful man this Montagu, who knew the theatres and most of the actors—especially Mr. Jack Stowell.

"The best of fellows," he assured Sir Philip; "capital company."

"That may be," replied Sir Philip, "but he beats his wife, and I mean to beat him."

"What, Phil, are you going to turn Don Quixote and fight with windmills?"

"Never mind my business," answered Philip; "you are to bring me and this Stowell together."

They found Mr. Stowell engaged at faro with his own particular friends, in a private room—a small room at the back of the house opening on to the leads, which offered a handy exit if the night's enjoyment turned to peril. The mohawks of that day were almost as clever as cats at climbing a steep roof or hanging on to a gutter.

Captain Montagu sent in his card to Mr. Stowell, asking permission to join him with a friend, a gentleman from the country. Jack knew that Montagu belonged to the hawk tribe, but scented a pigeon in the rural stranger, and received the pair with effusiveness. Sir Philip had disguised himself in a heavy fur-bordered coat and a flaxen periwig, but Mr. Stowell scanned him somewhat suspiciously notwithstanding. His constant attendance in the stage box had made his face very familiar to the Covent Garden actors, and it was only the fumes of brandy punch which prevented Stowell's recognition of him.

The play was fast and furious. Sir Philip in his character of country squire ordered punch with profuse liberality, and lost his money with a noisy recklessness, vowing that he would have his revenge before the night was out. Montagu watched him curiously, wondering what it all meant.

So the night wore on, Sir Philip showing unmistakable signs of intoxication, under which influence his uproariousness degenerated by-and-by into a maudlin stupidity. He went on losing money with a sleepy placidity that threw Jack Stowell off his guard and tempted that adventurer into a free indulgence in certain manœuvres which under other circumstances he would have considered to the last degree dangerous.

What was his astonishment when the country squire suddenly sprang to his feet and flung half a tumbler of punch in his face!

"Gentlemen," he cried, wiping the liquor from his disconcerted countenance, "the man is drunk, as you must perceive. I have been grossly insulted, but am too much a gentleman to take advantage of the situation. You had better get your friend away, Captain Montagu, while his legs can carry him, if they are still capable of that exertion. We have had enough play for to-night."

"Cheat, swindler!" cried Sir Philip. "I call my friend to witness that you have been playing with marked cards for the last hour. I saw you change the pack."

"It's a lie!" roared Jack.

"No, it isn't," said Montagu, "I've had my eye on you."

"By God! gentlemen, I'll have satisfaction for this," cried Jack, drawing his sword a very little way out of his scabbard.

"You shall," answered Sir Philip, "and this instant. I shall be glad to see whether you are as good at defending your own cur's life as you are at beating your wife."

"By heaven, I know you now!" cried Jack. "You are the fellow that sits in the stage box night after night and hangs on my wife's looks."

Sir Philip went to the door, locked it, and put the key in his pocket, then came back with his rapier drawn.

Montagu and the other men tried to prevent a fight, but Sir Philip was inexorably bent on settling all scores on the spot, and Stowell was savage in his cups and ready for anything. Preliminaries were hurried through—a table knocked over and a lot of glasses broken; but noise was a natural concomitant of pleasure in this tavern, and the riot awakened no curiosity in the sleepy drawer waiting below.

A space was cleared, and the two men stood opposite each other ghastly with passion; Sir Philip's assumed intoxication thrown off with his fur-bordered coat, John Stowell considerably the worse for liquor.

The actor was a skilled swordsman, but his first thrusts were too blindly savage to be effective. Sir Philip parried them easily, and stood looking at his antagonist with a scornful smile which goaded Stowell to madness.

"I'll wager my wife and you have got up this play between you," he said. "I ought to have known there was mischief on foot. She's too meek and pretty-spoken not to be a——"

The word he meant to say never passed his lips, for a sudden thrust in tierce from Philip Hazlemere's sword pierced his left lung and silenced him forever.

"When I saw the mark of your fist on your wife's forehead this morning, I swore to make her a widow to-night," said Sir Philip, as the actor fell face downward on the sanded floor.

The tavern servants were knocking at the door presently. Jack Stowell's fall had startled even their equanimity. Tables and glasses might be smashed without remark—they only served to swell the reckoning—but the fall of a human body invited attention. Captain Montagu opened the window and bustled his friend out upon the slippery leads below it, and, after some peril to life and limb in the descent, Sir Philip Hazlemere found himself in Long Acre, where the watchman was calling "Past four o'clock, and a snowy morning."

CHAPTER III.

HER FAREWELL SIGH.

Before next evening the town knew that Jack Stowell, the actor, had been killed in a tavern brawl; that Captain Montagu had bribed Mr. Stowell's friends to keep a judicious silence. The man had been killed in a fair fight, and no good could come of letting the name of the gentleman of fashion be dragged into the affair. Sir Philip Hazlemere found himself in Long Acre, where the watchman was calling "Past four o'clock, and a snowy morning."

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doubt of her love, or of her glad consent to his prayer. In a little while—just a decent interval for the satisfaction of the world—she would be his wife. The town would see her no more under those garish lights of the theatre. She would shine as a star still, but only in the calm heaven of home.

The brightness of the picture dispelled those gloomy fancies which the half-empty theatre and its dark mantle of fog had engendered.

The curtain rose, and at last he saw her. The lovely eyes were more brilliant than ever, and blinded him to the hollowness of the wan cheek. There was a thrilling tragedy in her every look which seemed the very breath and fire of genius. The creature standing there, pouring out her story of suffering, was wronged, oppressed; the innocent, helpless victim of hard and bloody men. The strange story, the strange character, seemed natural as she interpreted it. Sir Philip listened with all his soul in his ears, as he had done a hundred times play before—yet every line was familiar to him. The Duchess was one of Barbara's greatest characters.

He hung with rapt attention on every word, and devoured her pale loveliness with his eyes, yet was eager for the play to be over. He meant to lie in wait for her at the stage door, and accompany her home to her lodgings and stay with her just long enough to speak of their happy future, and to win her promise to be his wife as soon as her weeds could be laid aside. He would respect even idle prejudices for her sake, and wait for her while she went through the ceremony of mourning for the husband who had ill-used her.

The play dragged its slow length along to the awful horrors of the last, with its accumulated horrors—the wild masque of madmen, the tomb-maker, the bellman, the dirge, the executioners with coffin and cords. Barbara looked pale and shadowy as a spirit, a creature already escaped from worldly bondage, for whom death could have no terror. Thinly as the house was occupied, the curtain fell amidst a storm of applause. Sir Philip stood looking at the dark-green blankwaves as if that dying look of hers had rooted him to the spot—while the audience hurried out of the theatre, uneasy as to the possibility of hackney-coaches or protecting link-boys to guide them through the fog.

He turned suddenly at the sound of a sigh close behind him—a faint and mournful sigh—which startled and chilled him.

Barbara was standing in the dress she had worn in that last scene—the shroud-like drapery, which had so painfully reminded him of death. She stretched out her hands to him with a sad appealing gesture. He leaned eagerly forward and tried to clasp them in his own, but she withdrew herself from him with a shiver, and stood, shadow-like, in the shadow of the door-way.

"Dearest!" he exclaimed, between surprise and delight, "I was coming round to the stage door. I am most impatient to talk to you, to be assured of the truth of what you are free to make me the most blessed of men. My love, I have a world of sweet words to say to you. I may come, may I not? I may ride home with you in your coach?"

The lights went out suddenly while he was talking to her, breathless in his eagerness. She gave one more faint sigh, half pathetic, half tender, and left him. She had not blessed him with a word, but he took this gentle silence to mean consent.

He groped his way out of the dark theatre, and went round to the stage door. He did not present himself at that entrance, but waited discreetly on the opposite side of the narrow street, till Barbara's coach should be called. He had watched for her thus, in a futile aimless manner, on many a previous night, and was familiar with her habits.

* * * * * * *

There were a couple of hackney-coaches waiting in the street under the curtain of fog. Presently a link-boy came hurriedly along with his flaring torch, followed by a breathless gentleman in a brown coat and wig of the same color. The link-boy crossed the road, and the gentleman after him, and both vanished within the theatre.

Sir Philip wondered idly what the breathless gentleman's business could be.

He waited a long time, as it appeared to his impatience, and still there was no call for Mrs. Stowell's hackney-coach. A group of actors came out, and walked on the opposite pavement, talking intently. The gentleman in brown came out again, and trotted off into the fog, still under guidance of the link-boy. The stage doorkeeper appeared on the threshold, looked up and down the street, and seemed about to extinguish his dim oil lamp and close his door for the night. Sir Philip Blankwaves ran across the street just in time to stop him.

"Why are you shutting up?" he asked; "Mrs. Stowell has not left the theatre, has she?"

It seemed just possible that he had missed her in the fog.

"No, poor thing, she won't go out till to-morrow; and then she'll be carried out feet-foremost."

"Great God! what do you mean?"

"It's a sad ending for such a pretty creature," said the doorkeeper with a sigh, "and it was that brute's ill-usage was at the bottom of it. She's been sickening of a consumption for the last three months—we all of us knowed it—and she fainted in at this door to-night I said she looked fitter for her coffin than for the stage. And the curtain was no sooner down than she dropped all of a heap with one narrow streak of dark blood oozing out of her lips and trickling down her white gown. She was gone before they could carry her to her dressing-room. They sent for Dr. Budd, of Berners street, but it was too late. She didn't wait for the doctors to help her out of this world."

Yes, at the moment when he had looked into that sweet face, seen those sad eyes looking into his with ineffable love and pity, Barbara's troubled soul had winged its flight skyward.

A PRACTICAL RETORT.—There is a story of a noble lord who once gave his friend a golden snuff box, on the cover of which an ass's head was painted. Not much flattered by this present, and wishing to turn the tables on the author of the joke, the recipient took out the ass, and inserted instead the portrait of the lord. The next day at dinner, he, as if by accident, put his box upon the table. The lord who wished to amuse his guests at the expense of his friend, made mention of the snuff box, and aroused the curiosity of those around him. A lady asked to see it. It was passed to her. She opened it and exclaimed, "Perfect! It is a striking likeness. Indeed, my lord, it is one of the best portraits of you that I ever saw!" The lord was naturally embarrassed at the joke which he thought was so hard upon him. While he was reflecting upon the offensiveness of it, the lady passed the box to her neighbor, who made similar remarks about it. The box thus went around the table, each one expatiating upon the resemblance. The nobleman was much astonished at this course of things; but when it came to his turn to look, he had to confess that his friend had got the best of him.

THE SEVEN AGES.

At Two she is a tiny lass,
And joy she scarcely knows from sorrow;
She scarce consults her heart-ing-glass;
She has no thought of sad to-morrow!

At Four, she is a merry maid,
And looks on aught but play as folly;
She can't believe 'tis pin's forever fade—
That only sawdust is her dolly.

At Eight, her troubles come in scores,
For oft she is perverse and haughty;
A pouting puss in pina-fores—
Who's sometimes whipped when she is naughty!

At Twelve, she is a saucy tease,
Who knows full well her glances rankle,
Her petitionis scarce veil her knees,
And fairy frills scarce kiss her ankle.

At Fifteen, she's the pearl of pets,
And feels assured her pow'r is strengthened;
Her snowy school-girl trouserettes
Are hidden when her skirt is lengthened.

At Sixteen, she's the sweetest sweet,
And dresses in the height of fashion,
She feels her heart beats quicker, pulse beat,
In earnest for the tender passion.

At Eighteen, p'raps she may be sold
Her lot to share for worse or better;
She'll either sell her heart for gold—
Or give it for a golden fetter!

WOMAN'S WIT.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

BY JOHN L. HERBE.

CHAPTER II.

One day, the lawyer sat in his office busy over some legal document when Mrs. Peterson entered. She seemed agitated, and was obliged to rest for a short time before she could compose herself sufficiently to make known the object of her visit.

"Mr. Williams," at length spoke she, still somewhat agitated, "how long have you known Mr. Peterson, my late husband?"

"From boyhood," replied he.

"Was he ever married?"

"Bless your heart, no!" exclaimed the lawyer in surprise.

"In looking over an escritoire in the library," said the lady, "I chanced to touch a secret spring and a panel slid aside. I saw several papers within the cavity thus revealed, and in a small casket this likeness."

She handed an oval framed likeness to him, and the face of a marvelously beautiful girl met his gaze. Examining it in silence for a few moments he asked:

"And the papers you mentioned; did they throw no light on the matter?"

"No more than that they were little love notes, that carry girl's fondle and send to the object of her affections."

"No allusion to marriage?" asked he.

"None whatever."

"Have you them with you, Mrs. Peterson?"

"No; I did not think it necessary."

"But you preserved them?" questioned the lawyer, anxiously.

"Yes," was the reply. "I returned them into their secret hiding place."

"That was proper," said the lawyer, "for if there should ever be a question of a previous marriage, those papers may become of use. Was there a name attached to these billet doux?"

"Yes," replied the lady, strangely agitated.

"Would you be kind enough to tell me what the name is?"

Mrs. Peterson hesitated answering for some moments; then, as if a sudden idea struck her, she asked:

"Would you recognize Mr. Peterson's handwriting of twenty years ago were you to see a specimen of it?"

"I might possibly do so," returned the lawyer in deep thought. "Yes I think I would, for we were boys together in school, and I think I have some of his chirography still in my possession."

"Look on the back of the portrait," said the lady.

Mr. Williams did so and saw these words in faint characters written there:

"MY LITTLE WIFE."

"Do you think that is Mr. Peterson's handwriting?" asked she, in a faint voice.

"Poor fellow," said Mr. Williams; "for to tell the truth, it is but little different from what it has been up to the day of his death."

"Suppose he was really married to this sweet girl, and still living, how would that affect my position," asked the widow, with a pallid face.

"You jump at grave conclusions, Mrs. Peterson, how needlessly alarm yourself. It is scarcely probable that even if a marriage had taken place, that the lady is still in the land of the living to demand her rights. After being silent these lapse of years, one would naturally conclude that, if once his wife, this lady must either be dead, or——" the lawyer hesitated.

"Or what?" eagerly inquired Mrs. Peterson.

"Or divorced years ago," concluding the sentence; "for he had resided here these thirty years in succession and I never once heard him hint a slighest regret of his having a wife, and that fact must quiet your apprehensions, for you have learned by experience what the Stockport gossips are capable of."

Mrs. Peterson smiled in spite of her fears, at the concluding remarks of her lawyer, while he laughed outright.

After remaining a few moments longer, the lady left in a more composed state of mind, but her heart went strangely towards the beautiful creature so delicately pictured there.

* * * * * * *

Howard Malcolm confided all his troubles to his kind employer of whose sympathy he was always certain.

One day he abruptly informed the lawyer that after seeing those sad eyes looking into his with ineffable love and pity, Barbara's troubled soul had winged its flight skyward.

Gregory Peterson also saw the intimacy between the lawyer's clerk and Alice Peterson, and as he had a covetous eye on that part of the property which would become his in case she married, he hoped the union would take place. He would gladly have hastened the event by becoming intimate with Malcolm, and fix matters to suit his views, but he feared that such a course would excite the suspicion of Mrs. Peterson, whom he admitted to be an exceedingly shrewd and wide-awake woman.

However, he watched the progress of affairs with a sharp eye and ere long he was gratified to see that they were very intimate and that love, at least on the part of the young man, was clearly evident.

Finally one day, the the gossips of Stockport were electrified, and their tongues set to wagging once more over a sweet morsel. The fellow Peterson was going to marry Howard Malcolm!

Gregory Peterson was so elated, when he discovered that the report was the strict truth, that he departed to the scene of his former revelries in the neighboring village—and commenced a series of dissipation which bid fair to eclipse all his former carousals, and several weeks elapsed before he was stopped in his evil career.

But while he was thus engaged, and inwardly congratulating himself of soon being able to replenish his means which were so rapidly dwindling away, events were transpiring in Stockport which were destined to strike dismay to his corrupt heart.

Howard Malcolm visited his affianced one day, and during their conversation alluded to his early life. He had long since confided all to her which was in substance as follows:

His mother died when he was six years of age. His home had been in New Orleans where she took the yellow fever and died. Before her death she gave him a large oval locket saying that it would be of great advantage to him when he became of age, that he should go to Stockport and there—but when she spoke thus far she suddenly fell back and expired.

"And you have no clue to what she meant to convey to you?" asked Alice.

"Not the faintest," was the sad reply.

"And that locket, what did it contain?"

"It seems a solid plate without containing anything calculated to throw any light on the unspoken revelation caused by her sudden death.

"I would like to see that locket," observed the lady; "I have a strange presentiment that it in some manner contains important information."

"You can be gratified," said he, "for of late I have always carried it about me."

He drew a trinket-box forward an inner pocket, and took the locket therefrom. It seemed more like a medallion, in not having any visible opening, but had a ring attached to it, similar to that of a watch.

It was of gold and elaborately chased, with three very minute letters engraved among a wreath of flowers.

"What do those initials stand for?" asked Alice.

"Initials?" exclaimed he, "I know of no initials."

"They are very small," observed she, handing the locket to him, "but I can plainly make them out; they are 'G. & C.'"

"I can also see them now," said he, "but I never saw them before; 'G. and C.'" mused he, "my mother's name was Cora, but what 'G.' stands for I cannot tell."

"Cora!" cried the lady, starting, "do you remember your mother's features?"

"I shall never forget them while I live," said he.

"Wait a moment," said Alice, and she hurriedly left her lover. She shortly returned and placed something in his hand. It was the ivory portrait of the beautiful girl!

"The young man took it and gave one glance, then sprang to his feet exclaiming:

"*My mother, my darling mother!*" and he sprang to his lips with passionate fervor. Then suddenly remembering how he became possessed of it, he cried:

"Alice, where in Heaven's name did you get the portrait of my mother?"

But the bashful and speechless; she essayed to answer her lover's question, but her tongue seemed paralyzed, it was only after a minute or two had elapsed that she found utterance.

"I discovered it in a secret recess of my late husband's escritoire," said she, "and those notes were also in the same place," handing him the little love missives before alluded to.

"Alice," cried he suddenly, after reading the letters, "Mr. Peterson's name was George, and 'G.' may stand for that name. Do you not see?" said she, "and see, on the back of the likeness, in his own handwriting he calls her his 'little wife.'"

"Oh that he was still living, so that this mystery might be cleared," said Howard.

The lady sat in silence and deep thought, while the young man seemed lost for a time in earnest and rapt contemplation of the portrait of his departed mother. He was startled by the words of his beloved, and looked up as one in a dream.

"Howard," said she, as if inspired by a sudden brilliant idea, "would it not be advisable to let the slightest whisper of his having a wife, and that fact must quiet your apprehensions, for you have learned by experience what the Stockport gossips are capable of."

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"Yes, at the moment when he had looked into that sweet face, seen those sad eyes looking into his with ineffable love and pity, Barbara's troubled soul had winged its flight skyward.

"Sea," said the lawyer, holding the locket in one hand, and the portrait in the other. "You will perceive that if there were an inside to this locket this likeness would just fit into it."

The young people admitted the possibility, and deemed it strange that neither had noticed it before.

"Now," continued the lawyer, "this locket, (which really looks more like a medallion to you,) I have seen in the possession of George Peterson, lately deceased."

Both Howard and Alice started at these words.

"And," continued the speaker, "if I am not mistaken it contains, or did contain, the likeness of the then owner, George Peterson."

The astonishment they felt was plainly depicted on the countenances of both listeners.

"So neither of you have opened it yet?" continued Mr. Williams.

"No," answered Howard. "Though it has been in my possession these many years I have never discovered its secret. Yet when my mother gave it to me I remember she called it a *locket*, but since, I have often thought that it would be more appropriate to call it a medal or medallion."

"I know how it is opened, see," said Mr. Williams.

The lawyer took out a penknife and opening it he pressed the point on a small steel circle within the ring of the locket and it flew apart, dividing in half; a paper fell from it and fluttered to the floor. On the inside there appeared the likeness of a young man. The lawyer at once pronounced it to be the portrait of George Peterson at the age of twenty-two or twenty-five years.

In the meanwhile Howard had picked up the paper which had fallen from the locket, and as he cast his eyes over it he exclaimed,

"Thank God! the mystery is explained!" It was the certificate of marriage between George Peterson and Cora Malcolm!

The lawyer was no less astonished than his two young friends were at this unexpected discovery.

"This explains why my dear mother requested me to come to this village," observed the young man.

The lawyer quietly took the ivory likeness of Mrs. Peterson, (for so Howard's mother must now be called) and placed it into the locket. It fitted to a nicety.

"All the proofs are clear as day," observed he, "this likeness has been in the locket, and for reasons which we may never know, displaced and fell again into the possession of George Peterson." "Now, Howard, and my dear madam, entrust all this business to me, I shall hunt up the clergyman and witnesses to this marriage, and we shall astonish Master Gregory Peterson as he has never been astonished before."

Mrs. Peterson at this moment burst into a clear ringing laugh which caused both gentlemen to gaze at her in surprise, and on being pressed to explain the cause of her merriment she replied:

"Oh, Mr. Williams, such a bright idea entered my mind, such a joke—I might say; but I will not let you into the secret until"—here she blushed deeply—"until I am the wife of dear Howard!" she finally concluded.

Neither of the gentlemen urged her any further, and after half an hour's further pleasant chat, Mr. Williams departed taking with him the locket, portraits and marriage certificate, saying, he would at once enter upon the task so important to the young folks.

* * * * * * *

The wedding was a quiet affair, and took place at the residence of the bride: few were invited, and those only the most intimate friends of Alice and Mr. Williams, and the gossips of Stockport were left in their element once more; and as the terms of the late Mr. Peterson's will were well known, there were many who pronounced Mrs. Peterson a "foolish thing," to prefer a handsome man to a snug fortune.

Gregory Peterson was on one of his orgies in the neighboring town when the event took place. But he was soon apprised of it, and he roared in drunken triumph when the intelligence reached him.

Had he seen the quiet smiles of triumph on the faces of Mr. Williams, and the newly wedded couple when it announced his intention to call early to claim his property, he might have felt some fear that all was not as clear in the way to the forfeited inheritance as he supposed.

But when he finally made the demand through his lawyer, the answer that was returned created consternation and dismay.

* * * * * * *

It was a bright May morning, the hour was ten, when Mr. Joshua Tarleton was admitted into the sitting-room of the Peterson mansion.

The lady received him with smiles, while her husband merely bowed to the lawyer's obsequious salutation.

"Mrs. Malcolm—began the lawyer, when he was quickly interrupted by the lady, who said:

"Mrs. Peterson, if you please."

For a moment the lawyer was startled, then he gave a low chuckle as he remarked:

"A very good joke to think that a lady forgets her new name. However, it does not matter, Mrs. Malcolm—"

"*Mrs. Peterson, if you please sir!*"

This time the lady spoke with severity and decided emphasis upon every word.

The lawyer stood aghast. He knew not how to proceed, and for once in his life was nonplussed.

Mrs. Peterson took pity on the embarrassed man and thus delivered herself.

"You have doubtless been sent here by your client, Mr. Gregory Peterson, in reference to the property which he thinks to secure on account of my marriage."

"Just so," was the short reply.

"I refer you to my legal adviser, Mr. Williams," said the lady, "he will probably explain to your entire satisfaction, and Mr. Gregory Peterson's extreme mortification, that I shall keep all the property that was bequeathed to me by my former husband. So, good morning."

And the lady made a low bow, then left the room. Mr. Tarleton gazed after her like one stupified, then crushing his hat on his head, he hurried from the house with rapid strides, in the direction of lawyer Williams' office.

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The remainder can be told in a few words. The cause of Mrs. Peterson's merriment was the fact that by wedding Howard Malcolm Peterson she would be able to retain possession of the property which would have been forfeited had she changed her surname.

Mr. Tarleton and Mr. Williams had quite a heated discussion over the singular complication, but the latter blankly remarked that the lady had not forfeited her rights by marrying.

"She still retains the name of Peterson," said he, "and if you think you can make good your cause, proceed at once. The law is evidence enough for any intelligent jury; it does not say anywhere about *remaining a widow!* it merely says, 'The property to be held by her while she retains the name of Peterson.' Now, Mr. Tarleton, in the words of Boss Tweed, 'What are you going to do about it?'"

Mr. Tarleton gave it up, and when he explained matters to his client, and listened to his impotent ravings, he simply said:

"Mr. Peterson, everything is against you. If you should go to law you would lose the suit, as well as the money required to contest the will. We are simply the victims of a Woman's Wit."

THE END.

OATHS are vulgar, senseless, offensive, impious; they leave a noisome trail upon the lips, and a stamp of odium upon the soul. They are inexcusable. They gratify no sense, while they outrage taste and dignity.

MOTHER GOOSE.

BY S. A. E. MORE.

There is, somewhere a saying that there are young men, and it may be, old ones too, who think that if they were born in Boston, there is no need of their ever being born again. Now the inhabitants of Boston can lay claim to a good many proud laurels, and may can feathers, and nobody wants to deny that Boston is "the hub of the universe;" but when Boston comes to lay claim to Mother Goose, she lays claim to what she can't begin to prove was ever here.

Several good people have of late endeavored to make it appear that Mother Goose was a Boston lady; that her name was Elizabeth Foster, otherwise, Goose; that she reared six children of her own, and ten of the first Mrs. Goose's, besides any desirable number belonging to other people, hence, it is reasoned, she wrote of the "old woman who lived in a Shoe." Still, according to the biographical sketches of her that have recently been published, she lived in anything but a shoe; indeed, they lead us to believe that her home was not only one of respectability and roominess, but of affluence.

Now it is to be presumed, and may be proved, that there are a great many good and wise people in the world, both in and out of Boston, who rejoice in the name of Goose, and some of them may even have written poems, but our Mother Goose, the Mother Goose of the world, we know wasn't born in Boston.

The ancients believed her to be the daughter of Momus and Minerva. Momus was the god of ridicule, and it is said, was the inventor of the owl's sphere, to this, because he ridiculed whatever the other gods did until they could no longer endure his presence. It is not related just how they parted him on his journey through, but it is to be presumed they fetched him to the edge of the planet and shoved him off. A very easy and sensible way to dispose of criminals.

Whether Minerva was a schoolmate and champion of his there, and meeting him here in poverty and disgrace, remembered, pitied, and loved him, or whether their union was a blessed one, Mother Goose, like a dutiful daughter, accompanied or followed them to earth, does not appear.

All we know is, that while Minerva was instructing the Greeks in various useful arts, Momus was spending his time and talents somewhere; it is safely to be presumed, in watching over the education of his gifted daughter, and in teaching to men the art of faultfinding.

Long before Boston was endowed with place and name, the children of other lands listened to and lured the music of the melodious Mother Goose. The little Chinee, and the fair babes of the far Orient, knew of her and blessed her name before this new world had a written history or its people a living voice.

As the true singer, mother of poetry, and friend of song, we have known and loved her long, but no land can claim her, no people can say "she is ours."

Her poems are truly concise, witty, brilliant, fascinating, prophetical and famous. They charm the ignorant and delight the learned, and the pens of critics even, have often been found to write in her favor.

To the genuine poems of the real Mother Goose, however, have no doubt been from time to time added those of other lesser poets, and there is need of a Macpherson to sadly separate the true and discard the false; and there is need of a Blair to vindicate that MacPherson.

"Mother Goose" was no more born in Boston than the saints' Rest, or Beacon Street, and as it is not known where Ossian was born, it is a wonder that Boston does not lay claim to him, indeed, there is no reason why the future inhabitants of that forward metropolis may not as wisely and justly claim Ossian, as the present ones claim Mother Goose.

CURIOUS ADVENTURES OF A RING.

Among other interesting stories of lost rings, the following is related of an officer, who bought a ruby diamond just after the Indian mutiny. The officer had it set in a ring, and wore it for several years quite safely; but one day, chancing to be in London, he went into a shop to buy a pair of gloves, and looking at the ring on his little finger, he observed that the setting was empty, the diamond gone. He examined his glove, his pockets, the floor of the shop; no trace of the stone was to be seen, and so he gave it up as lost. However, he mentioned the matter at his club, and told the club-master to post up a notice offering $50 reward to any one who should find the diamond. A day or two afterward the stone was brought to him. It had been found by one of the housemaids, in a darkish passage that led to the billiard room. The reward was gladly paid, and the diamond taken to the jeweler's to be once more firmly replaced in the ring. Again some years passed. The officer had been back to India, and was once furlough in this country, and had gone to Scotland to shoot, with friends who had taken a moor in the highlands. One hot August day he had been out for several hours, tramping over hills and miles of close heather, grouse-shooting. He was still walking, when a covey of birds rose a little way off. He raised his gun to take aim, when his left hand—on the finger of its ring, and he saw that the setting was once more empty. Stopping to look at it the birds got away, and he laid down the gun on the heather beside him, and carefully examined the ring. Whether he stood with a very feeble hope of finding the glittering stone. He stooped for his gun, and the thought flashed into his mind: "I'll turn out the dogs, the only chance that had can-sed him to remark its absence from the ring it would have been lost away the next moment. Another visit to the jeweler, and the ring restored its place on the finger of its owner, and three or four years passed away. The officer had again returned to India, and was with his regiment, which was encamped near a large station, portions of some other regiments being close to them. He was acting as Adjutant to the general in command, and was writing at a small table placed close to the door of his tent. As his hand passed rapidly over the paper, his troublesome diamond once more dropped from its setting and fell on the table beside him. Being in a hurry, he merely uttered an angry exclamation, pushed the stone close to the inkstand, and went on with his writing. Presently a messenger came to say that the General wished to see him immediately: He flung all about the stone, threw on his uniform, buckled on his sword, and started at once for the quarters of the commanding officer. He was detained some little time, and when he returned to his own tent he looked directly for the diamond, which he had meanwhile recollected, but it was gone. A thief had been there during his absence, and had seen and appropriated the stone; and he never saw or heard of it again, though he offered a liberal reward for its restoration.

NEWS NOTES.

THE people of Massachusetts took out of the savings banks some $8,000,000 more last year than they put in.

BEETHOVEN'S monument will be erected at Vienna on the 26th of March, the fiftieth anniversary of the composer's death.

RAIN, formerly very rare in Lower Egypt, has become frequent in Alexandria and Cairo, in consequence of the extensive planting of the mulberry in that vicinity.

THERE is talk in London of setting up Cleopatra's needle in Northumberland avenue. To remove the obelisk from Alexandria and re-erect it will cost at least $65,000.

A ROYAL decree has been issued at Brussels prohibiting the importation into Belgium of horned cattle and sheep from Germany, England, Russia, Austria, and Turkey.

AGENTS of landowners in Southern Russia are said to be in this country making heavy purchases of agricultural machinery. They nearly all come from Western manufacturers.

THE British Council has issued further stringent orders against the importation into Great Britain from Germany and Belgium of cattle, hay, hides, horns, fat, bones, and fresh meat.

CHICAGO, in 1876, reported 199 business failures, with liabilities amounting to $9,164,700; Boston, 256 failures, with liabilities of $10,410,000, and New York, 807 failures, with liabilities of $23, 244,016.

THE number of brewers engaged in the United States in the manufacture of fermented liquors, during 1876, numbered 3,282, and they produced an aggregate of 9,000,000 barrels of beer.

NORFOLK has become the second cotton port in the United States. How rapidly it has advanced may be known from the fact that, ten years ago, Norfolk exported only 633 bales of cotton to European ports.

CALIFORNIA'S exports for the past year amounted to $80,451,971, being $40,797,206 treasure and $39,654,765 merchandise. There were few failures in San Francisco or the State. The yield of precious metals was $18,015,807, against $17,758,151 in 1875.

ACCORDING to the Kansas City *Price Current* the cattle drive from southwestern Texas during the year was 317,696. Of this number 250,352 were driven north of Kansas and to ill Indian contracts. The indications are that the drive for 1877 will be fully equal to that of last year.

DURING the year 1876 Harrisburg had less loss by fire than any city of its size in the United States. The whole amount was only $6,197. The fire department of the town consists of seven companies, five steam fire engine companies, one hose company, and one hook and ladder company.

SIGNOR BLITZ the well-known, ventriloquist, died last week, in Philadelphia, from acute bronchial disease, partially caused by the practice of ventriloquism. Few persons were more generally known than the deceased. His slight-of-hand performances are familiar to thousands of the readers of the POST.

IT is computed that in less than a month nearly six millions of people in Bengal, Madras and the adjacent country must trust to the government for the common necessaries of life. The calamity which now threatens a large part of the British Indian Empire is of such a character as to challenge the attention of the whole civilized world. In 1866 more than 175,000 people died of hunger in India in a few months.

THE total of all kinds of tea shipped to Great Britain from Chinese ports was 123,-417,081 pounds, of which 6,461,184 pounds were green teas. In the preceding season (1875–76) the total exportation was 123,-928,875 pounds, of which 3,419,007 pounds were green teas. The total exports of tea sent from all Chinese ports to the United States in the season of 1876–77 was 13,374,005 pounds, of which nearly half was green tea, while in 1875–76 the exportation was 10,-403,808 pounds, of which more than half was green tea.

THE whaling season for 1876 was fairly successful. The arrivals at New Bedford show nineteen profitable voyages, while fourteen resulted in a loss, this being fully up to the average of late years. The present whaling fleet, after deducting the recent losses in the Arctic Ocean, is one hundred and seventy-two vessels against one hundred and sixty-three at this time last year, one hundred and sixty-three in 1875, and the number at sea January 1, 1877, was one hundred and forty-six vessels against one hundred and thirty-seven a year ago, and one hundred and nineteen in 1875.

THE International Exhibition has advanced so far as the issue of an official bulletin, a handsome pamphlet, which explains the character of the scheme and gives all necessary information to exhibitors, whether the domestic or foreign. A lithographic plan shows the new arrangements of the Main Building, a prominent feature of which is an open space in the centre, with accommodations for eight thousand people, and tiers of seats for a chorus and orchestra extending from the floor to the organ gallery. This will make a noble place for concerts. The south transept is allotted to paintings will be in the southwest portion of the building, the agricultural and some minor exhibits in the northwestern portion, while the whole eastern end is to be given to machinery in the industrial display. The plan seems unexceptionable, and we shall before long have an opportunity to judge of its execution.

MR. JOHN ANDERSON'S gift of Penikese Island, in Buzzard's Bay, to Professor Agassiz, on which to found the Anderson School of Natural History, has finally come to naught. He put in the island at $100,000 and gave $50,000 in bonds. The enthusiastic naturalist gratefully accepted it, and buildings were put up and the school opened. But the fund was hardly more than enough to pay for the houses necessary and to keep them in order. Agassiz's energy raised enough to pay the deficiency. He died. Mr. Anderson's purse-strings were tightened, and he refused to help support it. The younger Professor Agassiz, who had succeeded his father, made one more effort, and offered to pay half the total expense if there were students enough to pay the remainder. These were not forthcoming, and Mr. Agassiz has given up the island, which is really valueless. Mr. Anderson's gift in cash amounted to a little more than $45,000, and he had all the honor. Professor Agassiz gave all his collections to the museum, and his family, besides their time and talents, have given to it without conditions over a quarter of a million of money.

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The Saturday Evening Post
PHILADELPHIA
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Saturday Evening, February 10, 1877

WHAT TO DO WITH BOYS.

What to do with boys, is one of the problems that occupies the thoughts of parents for many an anxious hour. Right decision of the question has given many the start in life which has led to eminence, perhaps a far greater number by mistaken judgment have heavily weighted the young man for his future career.

The decision should not be made arbitrarily. It is greatly unwise to fix upon some calling or profession merely because it seems to be a desirable one. The law, the ministry and medicine are overrun with incompetents who were destined to their profession because fond parents thought the calling respectable and remunerative.

The first point to be determined is, has the boy any special natural talent or aptitude which indicates what he can do best. If he have such a bias, nature has decided in advance the work for which he is intended. It will be cruelty to thwart the best of his disposition, provided, of course it be in a healthful direction. Better an enthusiastic mechanic than a drudge of a professional man, whatever the wealth of the parents. His own life will be easier, fuller of enjoyment, and his influence for good incomparably greater than they could become in any calling repugnant to him.

But the average boy shows a natural predilection for no work. He would be content without any trade or business if circumstances would permit his idleness. It is almost a fatal error to allow such a choice to be made. Work is the price of manhood. Insist upon it that the boy do something for himself; that he earn a living, no matter though he is to become a millionaire by inheritance. In such a case he will need more than ever to learn the worth of money and how to take care of it, by having learned how much a dollar costs.

Ordinarily, however, it is a blessed necessity that the boy shall make his own way in the world. Let him enter upon the first opening that presents itself where he can have a fair opportunity, and teach him to do his best in it. If he be encouraged to faithfulness, his time for advancement and wider opportunity will surely come. Everybody is on the lookout for young men with steady purpose and honest industry, and these can be made habitual in any respectable calling.

FAIRS IN SCHOOLS.

If the business of a teacher were to get as much knowledge as possible in a given time into the mind of the pupil, many expedients now resorted to, would be commendable. But such is not his proper work; any more than it is the right course for a nurse to force the greatest possible amount of food into the child's stomach. Her calling is to rear the child; to so minister to his physical wants, that he shall increase in stature and in strength. The teacher's true work is to aid in developing the mental powers; to make the boy more eager for knowledge, quicker of apprehension and a more cogent reasoner.

Stimulation by prizes retards rather than forwards the proper work of education. It is a practical way of saying to the boy "the rewards of learning are insufficient; it is a task for which extra compensation is to be awarded." The pupil's thoughts are fixed on the medal; he strives for that, and the lessons are considered important only as a means to the coveted end. It is wrong in principle and injurious in practice.

The young are eager to learn; they are never tired of making new discoveries suited to their limited capacities. They are always ready with questions on subjects within their ken. It is for the skillful teacher to guide this natural appetite for instruction; to keep it healthful and active by carefully presenting proper subjects for the child's thought, by teaching him to investigate for himself, to enlarge his sphere of search, and to let him enjoy the proper rewards of such investigation in the pleasure which each new discovery brings. A boy trained in this way does not need the stimulus of the medal or of the birch. So long as he really desires to know, he will exert himself to find out: if he have not an appetite for the mental food presented, it will only sicken him and dwarf his powers, to crowd it down his unwilling apprehension sugared over with rewards, or to force it there by punishment.

Appeals to ambition will cultivate the spirit of ambition, they will not develop love of learning; and vanity and love of superiority which are the motives usually addressed in prize-giving, are not so dormant in the nature of most children as to need special stimulus.

We would unhesitatingly banish the prize and the rod from every schoolroom, and rely upon the method indicated by the nature of the child. It may not show as immediate results, or present so attractive a display on examination days, but the gain will be sure, and when the real test of power comes in practical life, the boy will pass the prizetakers with ease, on the road to success.

A THEOLOGICAL QUESTION.

"Ever since Eve ate the apple——."

We object. That apple has been thrust down the throats of people long enough. It may be heresy not to swallow it; if so, then here goes for heterodoxy and new light.

This is not a battle on behalf of Eve; everybody knows she was tempted and yielded; that her descendants have proved their legitimacy by going and doing likewise, and that they have done it so long that they love to do it. In fact we have all come to love Eve for giving us so good an excuse for enjoying our sins, although it is not, perhaps, just the thing to own up in this fashion; but this is not a fashion article, it relates to a fruit.

We know very well that apples are no contemptible fruit; that they exhibit very tempting qualities in their very young applehood. An average boy will walk further, climb higher, lie harder, and tempt providence generally with greater recklessness in pursuit of green apples, than for almost any other delight.

Perhaps the theory of the original unfortunate apple-eating took its rise from this very fact, supposing that the peculiar fascination of the fruit has descended with its other qualities.

But remember, Eve was no boy; bear in mind too that the apples of olden time were but the faintest hints of possibilities.

As described by Pliny, one of the earliest naturalists, the apple was a small fruit growing on a thorn bush, answering to our wild thorn apple. The glorious Summer Rough, a golden globe of perfumed sunshine, the rich Baldwin, luscious Spitzenberg, tempting Greening, melting Swaar; these were then only dreams of the future, indulged by some daring poet of a thorn bush catching its inspiration from the fragrance of its own blossoms of a May morning, to be wrought out by centuries of culture. Had Eve once tasted the original apple, Adam, warned by her sad grimaces would have fled in terror.

Don't ask, "what fruit was it then, if not the apple?" We do not pretend to be wiser than the Scriptures which leave the question unanswered. Our task ends with relieving the apple from the groundless obloquy which fanciful theology has cast upon it, and a warning against hastily accepting unfavorable conclusions from unsustained assertions.

THE ART OF PUTTING THINGS.

Spoiled in cooking or in the serving, is the fate of many an otherwise toothsome dish. A juicy roast on a greasy dish, or steaming joints fit for an epicure, placed on a table covered with an uncleanly cloth, lose half their attractiveness; the attention of any but a gross feeder is fastened upon the repulsive feature of the entertainment, and his appetite weakens.

It is only when all the senses harmonize that any one of them can be used with fullness of pleasure. The palate loses enjoyment if the eye be offended; music is less attractive in an apartment where not some odors prevail; pictures fail to please in presence of discordant sounds. The attention is distracted, the perceptions are confused, and in the mixture of pleasurable and disagreeable sensations, the latter unpleasantly assert themselves.

These facts are of wide application, extending beyond the mere gratification of the senses, although they are well worth considering in this relation alone, so much enjoyment in life depends on their exercise. In the external and internal fitting-up of the homestead they are especially worthy of attention. A cheerful approach to the door; a pleasing impression made by a neat inviting looking hall; furniture, drapery and ornaments properly and harmoniously arranged, will heighten the joys of love itself in the household. Who can be thoroughly satisfied, when a glance through the window reveals details of the family washing, ruins of superannuated stoves and the horrors of the garbage-box in the adjacent yard? Everybody can recall some unpretending cottage, where by simple harmony of surroundings and appointments, more of brightness was diffused than could be imparted by the most dazzling display of mere wealth.

In the same direction lies the secret of dressing attractively. Neatness and harmony are at the foundation of all true taste. A highly-colored necktie may give a loud appearance to a whole sober suit; the peeping out of a slovenly skirt will destroy the effect of the richest toilette.

Equally applicable is this principle to the way of doing things. The "No" of a kind-hearted man whose manner is inspired by his goodness, is less offensive than the gruff or snappish "yes" of a boor. Truth may be fired at a man in such a way as to arouse his anger, or it may be calmly presented so as to win his attention and acquiescence. In short, the way of doing it, may defeat the best action, and any and all things are most effective when properly presented.

THE TREE OF TIME.

BY CHARLES S. LARNED.

As the days fall off from the tree of Time,
To lie in the West like gold,
Our forms beneath its shade divine,
At last sit gray and old.

To look upon the earth with eyes
Which only see how bare
The deadened boughs heaped to memories
Of Spring's bright blooming year!

'Twas then the little laughing child,
Caught first its birth's glad day,
Fluttering down with sepyra mild,
In one gold leaf at play!

In bloom of summer fell the fruit,
From Time's young tree for life—
A maiden charmed by Love's low lute,
Walked youth's sweet blushing wife!

These lived to watch the changing leaves,
Red died on that last night
Which saw them cluster round the graves,
About the tree's lone site!

The tree of Time, although so fair,
Must here but grow for life,
Yet blooms it ever green up there—
In gardens mid the sky!

HER LAST APPEARANCE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET."

CHAPTER I.

HER TEMPTATION.

"He is a scoundrel," said the gentleman.

"He is my husband," answered the lady.

Not much in either sentence, yet both came from bursting hearts and lips passionpale.

"Is that your answer, Barbara?"

"The only answer God and man will suffer me to give you."

"And he is to break your heart—and squander your earnings on his low vices—keep you shut up in this shabby lodging while all the town is raving about your beauty and your genius—and you are to have no redress, no escape?"

"Yes," she answered with a look that thrilled him; "I shall escape him—in my coffin. My wrongs will have redress—at the Day of Judgment."

"Barbara, he is killing you."

"Don't you think that the greatest kindness he has ever shown me?"

The gentleman began to pace the room distractedly. The lady turned to the tall narrow glass over the chimney-piece, with a curious look, half-mournful, half-scornful.

She was contemplating the beauty which was said to have set the town raving.

What did that tarnished mirror show her? A small pale face, wan and wasted by studious nights and a heavy burden of care, dark shadows about dark eyes, but such eyes! They seemed, in this cold light of day, too black and large and brilliant for the small white face; but at night, in the lamp-lit theatre, with a patch of rouge under them, and the light of genius burning in them, they were the most dazzling, soul-ensnaring eyes man had ever seen: or so said the cognoscenti, Horace Walpole among them; and Mrs. Barbara Stowell was the last fashion at Covent Garden Theatre.

It was only her second season on those famous boards, and her beauty and talent still wore the bloom of novelty. The town had never seen her by daylight. She never drove in the Ring, or appeared at a fashionable auction, or mystified her admirers at a masquerade in the Pantheon, or drank whey in St. James's Park—in a word, she went nowhere—and the town had invented twenty stories to account for this secluded existence. Yet no one had guessed the truth, which was sadder than the most dismal fiction that had floated down the idle stream of London gossip. Barbara Stowell kept aloof from the world for three reasons —first, because her husband was a tyrant and a ruffian, and left her without a sixpence—secondly, because her heart was broken—thirdly, because she was dying.

This last reason was only known to herself. No stethoscope had sounded that aching breast, and hope, which, with eyeglass and gold-headed cane, and chariot and footman, had been called in to testify in scientific language to the progress of the destroyer, told Barbara Stowell knew very well that her days were numbered, and that her span of life was of the briefest.

She was not in the first freshness of her youth. Three years ago she had been a country parson's daughter, leading the peacefullest, happiest, obscurest life in a Hertfordshire village—when, as ill-luck would have it, she came to London to visit an aunt who was in business there as a milliner, and at this lady's house met Jack Stowell, an actor of small parts at Covent Garden—a cold-hearted rascal with a fine person, a kind of surface cleverness which had a vast effect upon simple folk, and a fashionable conceit. He had the usual idea of the unsuccessful actor, that his manager was his only enemy, and that the town was languishing to see Jack Stowell. Romeo, Hamlet, and the whole string of youthful heroes. His subordinate position soured him; and he sought consolation from drink and play, and was about as profitable a specimen of his particular class as could be found in the purlieus of Bow Street. But he knew how to make himself agreeable in society, and passed for a "mighty pretty fellow." He had the art of being sentimental too on occasion, could cast up his eyes to heaven and affect a mind all aglow with honor and manly feeling.

Upon this whited sepulchre Barbara wasted the freshness of her young life. He was caught by her somewhat singular beauty, which was rather that of an old Italian picture than of a rustic Englishwoman. Beauty and a pleasing impression made by a neat inviting looking hall; furniture, drapery and ornaments properly and harmoniously arranged, will heighten the joys of love itself in the household. Who can be thoroughly satisfied, when a glance through the window reveals details of the family washing, ruins of superannuated stoves and the horrors of the garbage-box in the adjacent yard? Everybody can recall some unpretending cottage, where by simple harmony of surroundings and appointments, more of brightness was diffused than could be imparted by the most dazzling display of mere wealth.

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This fond and foolish dream lasted less than a month. Before that moon which had shone a pale crescent in the fair summer sky of her wedding night had waxed and waned, Barbara knew that she was married to a drunkard and a gambler, a brute who was savage in his cups, a profligate who had lived amongst degraded women until he knew not what womanly purity meant, a wretch who existed only for self-gratification, and whose love for her had been little more than the fancy of an hour.

He lost no time in teaching her all he knew of his art. She had real genius, was fond of study, and soon discovered that he knew very little. She had her own ideas about all those heroines of which he only knew the merest conventionalities and traditions. She sat late into the night studying, while he was drinking and punting in some low tavern. Her sorrows, her disappointments, her disgusts, drove her to the study of the drama for consolation and temporary forgetfulness. These heroines of tragedy, who were all miserable, seemed to sympathize with her own misery. She became passionately fond of her art before ever she had trodden the stage.

Jack Stowell took his wife to Rich, and asked for an engagement. Had Barbara been an ordinary woman, the manager would have given her a subordinate place in his troupe, and a pittance of twenty shillings a week. But her exceptional beauty struck the manager's eye. He had half-a-dozen geniuses in his company, but their good looks were on the wane. This young face, these Italian eyes, would attract the town—and the town had been leaning a little towards the Italian house lately.

"I'll tell you what, Stowell," said the manager, "I should like to give your wife a chance. But to take any hold upon the public, she must appear in a leading part. I couldn't trust her till she has learnt the A B C of her profession. She must try her success in the provinces."

They were standing at noontide on the great stage at Covent Garden. The house was almost in darkness, and the vast circle of boxes shrouded in linen wrappings had a ghostly look that chilled Barbara's soul. What a little creature she seemed to herself in that mighty arena! Could she ever stand there and pour out her soul in the sorrows of Juliet, or the Duchess of Malfi, or Isabella, as she had done so often before the looking-glass in her dingy lodging?

"Jack," she said, as they were walking home—he had been unusually kind to her this morning—"I can't tell you what an awful feeling that great, dark, cold theatre gave me. I felt as if I was standing in my tomb."

"That shows what a little goose you are," retorted Jack contemptuously; "do you think anybody is going to give you such a big tomb as that?"

Mrs. Stowell appeared at the Theatre Royal, Bath, and tried her wings, as the manager called it, with marked success. There could be no doubt that she had the divine fire, a genius and bent so decided, that her lack of experience went for nothing —and then she worked like a slave, and threw her soul, her mind, her whole being—into this new business of her life. She lived only to act. What else had she to live for, with a husband who came home tipsy three or four nights out of the seven, and whose indifference grew more glaring?

She came to London the following winter, and took the town by storm. Her genius, her beauty, her youth, her purity, were on every tongue. She received almost as many letters as a prime minister in that first season of success—but it was found out in due time that she was inaccessible to flattery, and the fops and fribbles of her day ceased their persecutions.

Among so many who admired her and so many who were eager to pursue, there was only one who discovered her need of pity and pitied her.

This was Sir Philip Hazlemere, a young man of fashion and fortune—neither fop nor fribble—but a man of cultivated mind and intense feeling.

He saw, admired, and, ere long, adored the new actress—but he he did not approach her, as the others did, with fulsome letters which insulted her understanding, or costly gifts which offended her honor. He held himself aloof, and loved in silence—for the instinct of his heart told him that she was virtuous. But he was human, and his sense of honor could not altogether stifle hope. He found out where she lived, bought over the lodging-house keeper to his interest, and contrived to learn a great deal more than the well-informed world knew about Barbara Stowell.

He was told that her husband was a wretch, and ill-used her; that this brilliant beauty, who alone and sparkled by night like a star, was by daylight a wan and faded woman, haggard with sorrow and fatigue. As he had loved her before, when the history of her life was unknown to him, he loved her doubly now, and, taking hope from all that made her life hopeless, flung honor to the winds and determined to win her.

Could she be worse off, he asked himself, than she was now—the slave of a low-born profligate—the darling of an idle, gaping crowd—scorned and neglected at home, where a woman should be paramount? He was rich and his own master—there was all the bright glad world before them. He would take her to Italy, and live and die there for her sake, content and happy in the blessing of her sweet companionship. He had never touched her hand, never spoken to her; but he had lived for the last six months only to see and hear her, and it seemed to him that he knew every thought of her mind, every impulse of her heart. Had he not seen those lovely eyes answer his fond looks appealingly, as he hung over the stage box, and the business of the scene brought her near him, with a tender intelligence that told him he was understood?

If John Stowell should sue for a divorce, so much the better, thought Philip. He could then make his beloved Lady Hazlemere, and let the world see the crowning glory of his life. He was so deeply in love that he thought he would be everlasting renown to have won Barbara. He would go down to posterity famous as the husband of the loveliest woman of his time; like that Duke of Devonshire, of whom the world knows so little except that he had a beautiful Duchess.

One day Sir Philip Hazlemere took courage, emboldened by some new tale of Jack Stowell's brutality—and got himself introduced to the presence of his beloved. She was shocked at first, and very angry; but his deep respect melted her wrath, and for the first time in her life Barbara learnt how reverential, how humble, real love is. He was no bold seducer who had forced himself into her presence, but a man who pitied and honored her, and who would have deemed it a small thing to shed his blood for her sake.

He was no stranger to her, though she had never heard his voice till to-day. She had seen him in the theatre—night after night—and had divined that it was some stronger feeling than love of the drama which held him riveted to the same spot, listening to the same play, however often it might be repeated in the shifting repertoire of those days.

She knew that he loved her, and that earnest look of his had touched her deeply. What was it now for her, who had never known a good man's love, to hear him offer the devotion of a lifetime, and sue humbly for permission to carry her away from a life which was most abject misery?

Her heart thrilled as she heard him. Yes, this was true love—this was the glory and grace of life which she had missed. She could measure the greatness of her loss, now that it was too late. She saw what pitiful tinsel she had mistaken for purest gold. But, though every impulse of her heart drew her to this devoted lover, honor spoke louder than feeling, and made her marble. On one only point she yielded a little to her lover's pleading. She did not refuse him permission to see her again. He might come sometimes, but it must be seldom, and the hour in which he should forget the respect due to her as a true and loyal wife would be the hour that parted them forever.

"My life is so lonely!" she said, self-excusingly, after having accorded this permission; "it will be a comfort to me to see you now and then, for a brief half-hour, and to know that there is some one in this great busy world who pities and cares for me."

She had one reason for granting Sir Philip's prayer, which would have well-nigh broken his heart could he have guessed it. This was her inward conviction that her life was near its close. There was hardly time for temptation between the present hour and the grave. And every day seemed to carry her further from the things and thoughts of earth. Her husband's cruelties stung less keenly than of old—his own degradation, which had been the heaviest part of her burden, seemed further away from her—as if he and she lived in different worlds. Her stage triumphs, which had once intoxicated her, now seemed unreal as the pageant of a dream. Yes, the ties that bind this weak flesh to earthly joys and suffering were gradually loosening. The fetters were slipping off this weary clay.

CHAPTER II.

HER AVENGER.

Sir Philip showed himself not undeserving Barbara's confidence. He came to the sordid London lodging—a caravanera which had housed wandering tribes of shabby-genteel adventurers for the last twenty years, and whose dingy panelling seemed to cast forth an odor of poverty. He brought his idol hot-house flowers and fruits —the weekly papers—those thin little leaflets which amused our ancestors—a new book now and then—and the latest news of the town—that floating gossip of the clubs, which Walpole was writing to Sir Horace Mann. He came and sat beside her, as she worked at her tambour frame, and cheered her by a tenderness too reverent to alarm. In a word, he made her happy.

If she were slowly fading out of life, he did not see the change or guess that this fair flower was soon to wither. He saw her too frequently to perceive the gradual progress of decay. Her beauty was of ethereal type, to which disease lent new charms.

One day he found her with an ugly bruise upon her forehead; she had tried to conceal it with the loose ringlets of her dark hair, but his quick eye saw the mark. When pressed by his solicitous questioning, she gave a somewhat lame account of the matter. She had been passing from the sitting-room to her bed-chamber last night, when a gust of wind extinguished her candle, and she had fallen and wounded herself against the edge of the chest of drawers. She crimsoned and faltered as she tried to explain this accident.

"Barbara, you are deceiving me!" cried Sir Philip. "It was a man's clenched fist left that mark. You shall not live with him another day."

And then came impassioned pleading which shook her soul—fond offers of a sword glad life in a foreign land—a divorce—a new marriage—honor—station.

"But dishonor first," said Barbara. "Can the last shame ever lead to honor? No, Sir Philip, I will not do evil that good may come of it."

No eloquence of her lover's could move her from this resolve. She was firm as the rock, though passionate as the waves that beat against it. He left her at last, burning with indignation against her tyrant.

"God keep and comfort you," he cried at parting. "I will not see you again until you are free."

These words startled her, and she pondered them, full of alarm. Did he mean any threat against her husband? Ought she to warn Jack Stowell of his danger?

* * * * * * *

Sir Philip Hazlemere and Jack Stowell had never yet crossed each other's path. The surest place in which not to find the husband is his own home. But now Sir Philip was seized with a sudden fancy for making Mr. Stowell's acquaintance—or at any rate for coming face to face with him in some of his favorite haunts. These were not difficult to discover. He played deep and he drank hard, and his chosen resort was a disreputable tavern in a narrow street out of Long Acre, where play and drink were the order of the night, and many a friendly festivity had ended in a bloody brawl.

Here on a December midnight, when the barrenness of Covent Garden were greasy with a thaw, and the link boys were reaping their harvest in a thick brown fog, Sir Philip resorted directly the play was over, taking one Captain Montagu, a friend and confidant, with him. This Montagu, who knew the theatres and most of the actors—among them Jack Stowell.

"The best of fellows," he assured Sir Philip; "a capital companion."

"That may be," replied Sir Philip, "but he beats his wife, and I mean to beat him."

"What, Phil, are you going to turn Don Quixote and fight with windmills?"

"Never mind my business," answered Philip; "yours is to bring me and this Stowell together."

They found Mr. Stowell engaged at faro with his own particular friends, in a private room—a small room at the back of the house opening on to the leads, which offered a handy exit if the night's enjoyment turned out less pleasant than usual. They were almost as clever as cats at climbing a steep roof or hanging on to a gutter.

Captain Montagu sent in his card to Mr. Stowell, asking permission to join him with a friend, a gentleman from the country. Jack knew that Montagu belonged to the hawk tribe, but scented a pigeon in the rural stranger, and received the pair with effusiveness. Sir Philip had disguised himself in a heavy fur-bordered coat and a flaxen periwig, but Mr. Stowell scanned him somewhat suspiciously notwithstanding. His constant attendance in the stage box had made his face very familiar to the Covent Garden actors, and it was only the fumes of brandy punch which prevented Stowell's recognition of him.

The play was fast and furious. Sir Philip in his character of country squire ordered punch with profuse liberality, and lost his money with a noisy recklessness, vowing that he would have his revenge before the night was out. Montagu watched him curiously, wondering what it all meant.

So the night wore on, Sir Philip showing unmistakable signs of intoxication, under which influence his unceremonious degenerated by-and-by into a maudlin stupidity. He went on losing money with a sleepy placidity that threw Jack Stowell off his guard and tempted that adventurer into a free indulgence in certain manœuvres which under other circumstances he would have considered to the last degree dangerous.

What was his astonishment when the country squire suddenly sprang to his feet and flung half a tumbler of punch in his face!

"Gentlemen," he cried, wiping the liquor from his disconcerted countenance, "the man is drunk, as you must perceive. I have been grossly insulted, but am too much a gentleman to take advantage of the situation. You had better get your friend away, Captain Montagu, while his legs can carry him, if they are still capable of that exertion. We have had enough play for to-night."

"Cheat, swindler!" cried Sir Philip. "I call my friend to witness that you have been playing with marked cards for the last hour. I saw you change the pack."

"It's a lie!" roared Jack.

"No, it isn't," said Montagu, "I've had my eye on you."

"By God, gentlemen, I'll have satisfaction for this," cried Jack, drawing his sword a very little way out of his scabbard.

"You shall," answered Sir Philip, "and this instant. I shall be glad to see whether you are as good a swordsman as your own cur's life as you are at beating your wife."

"By heaven, I know you now!" cried Jack. "You are the fellow that sits in the stage box night after night and hangs on my wife's looks."

Sir Philip went to the door, locked it, and put the key in his pocket, then came back with his rapier drawn.

Montagu and the other men tried to prevent a fight, but Sir Philip was inexorably bent on settling all scores on the spot, and Stowell was savage in his cups and ready for anything. Preliminaries were hurried through—the table knocked over and a lot of glasses broken; but noise was a natural concomitant of pleasure in this tavern, and the riot awakened no curiosity in the sleepy drawer waiting below.

A space was cleared, and the two men stood opposite each other ghastly with passion; Sir Philip's assumed intoxication thrown off with his fur-bordered coat, John Stowell considerably the worse for liquor.

The actor was a skilled swordsman, but his first thrusts were too blindly savage to be dangerous. Sir Philip parried them easily, and stood looking at his antagonist with a scornful smile which goaded Stowell to madness.

"I'll wager my wife and you have got up this play between you," he said. "I ought to have known there was mischief on foot. She's too meek and pretty-spoken not to be a——"

The word he meant to say never passed his lips, for a sudden thrust in tierce from Philip Hazlemere's sword pierced his left lung and silenced him forever.

"When I saw the mark of your fist on your wife's forehead this morning, I swore to make her a widow to-night," said Sir Philip, as the actor fell face downward on the sanded floor.

The tavern servants were knocking at the door presently. Jack Stowell's fall had startled even their sensibility. Tables and glasses might be smashed without remark—they only served to swell the reckoning—but the fall of a human body invited attention. Captain Montagu opened the window and bustled his friend down upon the slippery leads below it, and, after some peril to life and limb in the brief descent, Sir Philip Hazlemere found himself in Long Acre, where the watch were calling "Past four o'clock, and a snowy morning."

CHAPTER III.

HER FAREWELL SIGH.

Before next evening the town knew that Jack Stowell, the actor, had been killed in a tavern brawl. Captain Montagu had bribed Mr. Stowell's friends to keep a judicious silence. A man had been killed in a fair fight, and no good could come of letting the police know the details of his end. So, when the Bow Street magistrate came to hold the investigatory, he could only extort a confused account of the fatal event. There had been a row at faro, and Stowell and another man, whose name nobody present knew, had drawn their swords and fought. Stowell was killed, and the stranger had escaped by a window before the tavern people came to the rescue. The tavern people had seen the stranger enter the house, a man with flaxen hair and a dark green riding coat trimmed with grey fur, but they had not seen him leave. The magistrate drew the general conclusion that everybody had been drunk, and the examination concluded in a futile manner, which in these days would have offered a fine opening for indignation leaders in the daily papers, and letters signed "Fiat Justitia," or "Peckham Eye;" but which at that easy-going period provoked nobody's notice, or served at most to provide Walpole with a paragraph for one of his immortal epistles.

Sir Philip called at Mrs. Stowell's and was told that she was ill, and keeping her her room. There was a change of pieces announced at Covent Garden, and the favorite was not to appear, "until to-morrow se'nnight, in consequence of a domestic affliction."

Sir Philip sent his customary offerings of hothouse fruits and flowers to Mrs. Stowell's address, but a restraining delicacy made him keep aloof while the actor's corpse lay at his lodgings and the young widow was still oppressed with the horror of her husband's death. She might suspect his hand, perhaps, at that untimely end. Would the pity she had shown him have awakened that it was to redress her wrongs his sword had been drawn? Upon this point Sir Philip was hopeful. The future was full of fair promises. There was only a dreary interval of doubt and severance to be endured in the present.

The thought that Barbara was confined to her room by illness did not alarm him. It was natural that her husband's death should have agitated and overwhelmed her. The sense of her release from his tyranny would soon give her hope and comfort. In the meanwhile Sir Philip counted the nights that must pass before her appearance.

The night came, and the play announced for representation was "Webster's Duchess of Malfi, concluding with the fourth Act: The Duchess by Mrs. Stowell." They were fond of tragedies in those days, the gloomier the better. Covent Garden was a spacious charnel-house for the exhibition of suicide and murder.

Sir Philip was in his box before the fiddlers began the overture. The house was more than half empty, despite the favorite's reappearance after her temporary retirement, despite the factitious interest attached to her as the widow of a man who met his death under somewhat mysterious circumstances a week ago. There was dire weather out of doors—a dense brown fog. Some of the fog had crept in at the doors of Covent Garden Theatre, and hung like an ugly black pall over pit and boxes.

The fiddlers began the overture to Artaxerxes. Philip Hazlemere's heart beat loud and fast. He longed for the rising of the curtain with an over-mastering impatience. It was more than a week since he had seen Barbara Stowell; and what a potent change in both their destinies had befallen since their last meeting! He could look at her now with triumphant delight. No fatal barrier rose between them. He had no

February 10, 1877.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

doubt of her love, or of her glad consent to his prayer. In a little while—just a decent interval for the satisfaction of the world—she would be his wife. The town would see her no more under these garish lights of the theatre. She would shine as a star still, but only in the calm heaven of home.

The brightness of the picture dispelled those gloomy fancies that had made happy theatre and its dark mantle of fog had engendered.

The curtain rose, and at last he saw her. The lovely eyes were more brilliant than ever, and blinded him to the hollowness of the wan cheek. There was a thrilling tragedy in her every look which seemed the very breath and fire of genius. The creature standing there, pouring out her story of suffering, was wronged, oppressed; the innocent, helpless victim of hard and bloody men. The strange story, the strange character, seemed natural as it interpreted it. Sir Philip listened with all his soul in his ears, as if he had never seen the gloomy play before—yet every line was familiar to him. The Duchess was one of Barbara's greatest characters.

He hung with rapt attention on every word, and devoured her pale loveliness with his eyes, yet was eager for the play to be over. He meant to lie in wait for her at the stage door, and accompany her home to her lodgings, and stay with her just long enough to speak of their happy future, and to win her promise to be his wife as soon as her weeds could be laid aside. He would respect even idle prejudices for her sake, and wait for her while she went through the ceremony of mourning for the husband who had ill-used her.

The play dragged its slow length along to the awful fourth act, with its accumulated horrors—the wild masque of madmen, the tomb-maker, the bellman, the dirge, the executioners with coffin and cords. Barbara looked pale and shadowy as a spirit, a creature already escaped from earthly bondage, for whom death could have no terror. Thinly as the house was occupied, the curtain fell amidst a storm of applause. Sir Philip stood looking at the dark-green blankness—as if that dying look of hers had rooted him to the spot—while the audience hurried out of the theatre, unwilling to tax the possibility of hackney-coaches or protecting link-boys to guide them through the gloom.

Barbara was standing in the wings, when a sigh behind him—a faint and mournful sigh—which startled and chilled him.

Barbara was standing there, in the dress she had worn in that last scene—the shroud-like drapery, which had so painfully reminded him of death. She stretched out her hands to him with a sad appealing gesture. He leaned eagerly forward and tried to clasp them in his own, but she withdrew herself from him with a shiver, and stood, shadow-like, in the shadow of the door-way.

"Dearest!" he exclaimed, between surprise and delight. "I was coming round to the door. I had meant to call and talk to you, to be assured of your love, now that you are free to make me the most blessed of men. My love, I have a world of sweet words to say to you. I may come, may I not? I may ride home with you in your coach?"

The lights went out suddenly while he was talking to her, breathless in his eagerness. She gave one more little sigh, half pathetic, half tender, and left him. She had not blessed him with a word, but he took this gentle silence to mean consent.

He groped his way out of the dark theatre, and went round to the stage door. He did not present himself at that entrance, but waited discreetly on the opposite side of the narrow street, till Barbara's coach should be called. He had waited for her thus, in a futile aimless manner, on many a previous night, and was familiar with her habits.

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There were a couple of hackney-coaches waiting in the street under the curtain of fog. Presently a link-boy appeared hurriedly along with his flaring torch, followed by a breathless gentleman in a brown coat and wig of the same color. The link-boy crossed the road, and the gentleman after him, and both vanished within the theatre.

Sir Philip wondered idly what the breathless gentleman's business could be.

He waited a long time, as it appeared to his impatience, and thought he was to call for Mrs. Stowell's hackney-coach. A group of actors came out, and walked on the opposite pavement, talking intently. The gentleman in brown came again, and trotted off into the fog, still under guidance of the link-boy. The stage doorkeeper appeared on the threshold, looked up and down the street, and seemed about to extinguish his dim oil-lamp and close the door for the night. Sir Philip Hazlemere ran across the street just in time to stop him.

"Why are you shutting up?" he asked; "Mrs. Stowell has not left the theatre, has she?"

It seemed just possible that he had missed her in the fog.

"No, poor thing, she won't go out till to-morrow; and then she'll be carried out feet-foremost."

"Great God! what do you mean?"

"It's a sad ending for such a pretty creature," said the doorkeeper with a sigh, "and it was that brute's ill-usage was at the bottom of it. She's been sickening of a consumption for the last three months, as all of us knew it—and when she came in at this door to-night I said she looked fitter for her coffin than for the stage. And the curtain was no sooner down than she dropped all of a heap, with one narrow streak of dark blood oozing out of her lips and trickling down her white gown. She was gone before they could carry her to her dressing-room. They sent for Dr. Budd, of Henrietta street. But it was too late. She didn't wait for the doctors to help her out of this world."

Yes, at the moment when he had looked into that shadow face, seen those sad eyes looking into his with ineffable love and pity, Barbara's troubled soul had winged its flight skyward.

A PRACTICAL RETORT.—There is a story of a noble lord who once gave his friend a golden snuff box, on the cover of which an ass's head was painted. Not much flattered by this present, and wishing to turn the tables on the author of the joke, the recipient took out the ass, and inserted instead the portrait of the lord. The next day at dinner, he, as if by accident, put his box upon the table. The lord who wished to amuse his guests at the expense of his friend, made mention of the snuff box, and aroused the curiosity of those around him. A lady asked to see it. It was passed to her. She opened it and exclaimed, "Perfect! It is a striking likeness! Indeed, my lord, it is one of the best portraits of you that I ever saw!" The lord was naturally embarrassed at the joke which he thought was so hard upon him. While he was reflecting upon the offensiveness of it, the lady passed the box to her neighbor, who made similar remarks about it. The box thus went around the table, each one expatiating upon the resemblance. The nobleman was much astonished at this course of things; but when it came to his turn to look, he had to confess that his friend had got the best of him.

THE SEVEN AGES.

At Two she is a tiny lass,
And joy she scarcely knows from sorrow;
She scarce consults her looking-glass;
She has no thought of sad to-morrow!

At Four, she is a merry maid,
And looks on sunlight but to play as fully;
She can't believe bright flowers fade—
That only sawdust is her dolly.

At Eight, her troubles come in scores,
For oft she is perverse and naughty;
A pouting puss in pinafores—
Who's sometimes whipped when she is naughty!

At Twelve, she is a saucy tease,
Who knows full well her glances rankle,
Her petticoats scarce veil her knees,
And fairy frills scarce kiss her ankle.

At Fifteen, she's the pearl of pets,
And feels assured her power's in strengthened;
Her snowy school-girl trousers'etics
Are hidden when her skirt is lengthened.

At Sixteen, she's the sweetest sweet,
And dresses in the height of fashion,
She feels her heart 'neath bodice beat,
In earnest for the tender passion.

At Eighteen, p'raps she may be sold
Her lot to share for worse or better;
She'll either sell her heart for gold—
Or give it for a golden fetter!

WOMAN'S WIT.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

BY JOHN L. ZIEBER.

CHAPTER II.

One day, the lawyer sat in his office busy over some legal document when Mrs. Peterson entered. She seemed agitated, and was obliged to rest for a short time before she could compose herself sufficiently to make known the object of her visit.

"Mr. Williams," at length spoke she, still somewhat agitated, "how long have you known Mr. Peterson, my late husband?"

"From boyhood," replied he.

"Was he ever married?"

"Bless your heart, no!" exclaimed the lawyer in surprise.

"In looking over an escritoire in the library," said the lady, "I chanced to touch a secret spring and a panel slid aside. I saw several papers within the cavity thus revealed, and in a small casket this likeness."

She handed an oval framed likeness to him, and the face of a marvellously beautiful girl met his gaze. Examining it in silence for a few moments he asked:

"And the papers you mentioned; did they throw no light on the matter?"

"No more than that they were little love notes, that any girl might indite and send to the object of her affections."

"No allusion to marriage?" asked he.

"None whatever."

"Have you them with you, Mrs. Peterson?"

"No; I did not think it necessary."

"But you preserved them?" questioned the lawyer, anxiously.

"Yes," was the reply. "I returned them into their secret hiding place."

"That was proper," said the lawyer, "for if there should ever be a question of a previous marriage those papers may become of use. Was there a name attached to these *billet doux*?"

"Yes," replied the lady, strangely agitated.

"Would you be kind enough to tell me what the name is?"

Mrs. Peterson hesitated answering for some seconds; then, as if a sudden idea struck her, she asked:

"Would you recognize Mr. Peterson's handwriting of twenty years ago were you to see a specimen of it?"

"I might possibly do so," returned the lawyer in deep thought. "Yes I think I would, for we were boys together in school, and I think I have some of his chirography still in my possession."

"Look on the back of the portrait," said the lady.

Mr. Williams did so and saw these words in faint characters written there:

"MY LITTLE WIFE."

"Do you think that is Mr. Peterson's handwriting?" asked she, in a faint voice.

"I am positive it is," replied Mr. Williams; "for to tell the truth, it is but little different from what it has been up to the day of his death."

"Suppose he was really married to this sweet girl, and still living, how would that affect my position," asked the widow, with a pallid face.

"You jump at grave conclusions, Mrs. Peterson, and needlessly alarm yourself. It is scarcely probable that even if a marriage had taken place, that the lady is still in the land of the living to demand her rights. After being silent these lapse of years, one would naturally conclude that, if once his wife, this lady must either be dead, or——" the lawyer hesitated.

"Or what?" eagerly inquired Mrs. Peterson.

"Or divorced years ago," concluding the sentence; "for he had resided here these thirty years in succession and I never once heard the slightest whisper of his having a wife, and that fact must quiet your apprehensions, for you have learned by experience what the Stockport gossips are capable of."

Mrs. Peterson smiled in spite of her fears, at the concluding remarks of her lawyer, while he laughed outright.

After remaining a few moments longer, the lady left in a more serene state of mind, but her heart went strangely towards the beautiful creature so delicately pictured there.

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Howard Malcolm confided all his troubles to his kind employer of whose sympathy he was always certain.

One day he abruptly informed the lawyer that after striving vainly to close his heart against the tender passion, he was compelled to admit to himself that he loved Mrs. Peterson with such an ardent affection that it preyed upon him to such an extent that it deprived him of rest at night and of peace in daytime.

"Her rejection would kill me," exclaimed the young man excitedly.

"Poor fellow," said Mr. Williams, pressing his hand warmly. "I feel deeply for you, but do not despair. Old eyes are sharper sometimes than young ones, and if I mistake not you have little to fear such a result."

"Mr. Williams," cried the young man, as the blood rushed to his face. "Do you speak from honest conviction, or is it only your affection for me that prompted these words?"

"I firmly believe what I said," was the impressive reply.

The young man paced the floor excitedly, when Mr. Williams checked him by saying:

"Wait awhile yet, Howard; but in the meantime make yourself as agreeable to her as you can. I shall probably see her often and shall sound her as to her state of feelings as regards yourself, and you shall know the result."

The young man promised to follow his advice.

Gregory Peterson also saw the intimacy between the lawyer's clerk and Alice Peterson, and as he had a covetous eye on that part of the property which would become his in case she married, he hoped the union would take place. He would gladly have hastened the event by becoming intimate with Malcolm, and fix matters to suit his views, but he feared that such a course would excite the suspicion of Mrs. Peterson, whom he admitted to be an exceedingly shrewd and wide-awake woman.

However, he watched the progress of affairs with a sharp eye and ere long he was gratified to see that they were very intimate and that love, at least on the part of the young man, was clearly evident.

Finally one day, the the gossips of Stockport were electrified, and their tongues set to wagging once more over a sweet morsel. The Widow Peterson was going to marry Howard Malcolm!

Gregory Peterson was so elated, when he discovered that the report was the strict truth, that he departed to the scene of his former revels—the neighboring village—and exmmenced a series of dissipation which laid fair to eclipse all his former carousals, and several weeks elapsed before he was stopped in his evil career.

But while he was thus engaged, and inwardly congratulating himself of soon being able to replenish his means which were so rapidly dwindling away, events were transpiring in Stockport which were destined to strike dismay to his corrupt heart.

Howard Malcolm visited his affianced one day, and during their conversation alluded to his early life. He had long since confided all to her which was in substance as follows:

His mother died when he was six years of age. His home had been in New Orleans where she took the yellow fever and died. Before her death she gave him a large oval locket saying that it would be of great advantage to him when he became of age, that he should go to Stockport and there——but when she spoke thus far she suddenly fell back and expired.

"And you have no clue to what she meant to convey to you?" asked Alice.

"Not the faintest," was the sad reply.

"And that locket, what did it contain?"

"It seems a solid plate without containing anything calculated to throw any light on the unspoken revelation caused by her sudden death.

"I would like to see that locket," observed the lady; "I have a strange presentiment that it in some manner contains important information."

"You can be gratified," said he, "for of late I have always carried it about me."

He took a buckskin bag from an inner pocket, and took the locket therefrom. It seemed more like a medallion, in not having any visible opening, but had a ring attached to it, similar to that of a watch.

It was of gold and elaborately chased, with three very minute letters engraved among a wreath of flowers.

"What is those initials stand for?" asked Alice.

"Initials?" exclaimed he, "I know of no initials."

"They are very small," observed she, handing the locket to him, "but I can plainly make them out; they are 'G. & C.'"

"I can also see them now," said he, "but never saw them before; 'G. and C.'" mused he, "my mother's name was Cora, but what 'G.' stands for I cannot tell."

"Cora!" cried the lady, starting, "do you remember your mother's features?"

"I shall never forget them while I live," said he.

"Wait a moment," said Alice, and she hurriedly left her lover. She shortly returned and placed something in his hand. It was the ivory portrait of the beautiful girl!

"The young man took it and gave one glance, then sprang to his feet exclaiming:

"*My beautiful mother!*" and he pressed it to his lips with passionate fervor. Then suddenly remembering how he became possessed of it, he cried:

"Alice, where in Heaven's name did you get the portrait of my mother?"

But the lady sat trembling and speechless; she essayed to answer her lover's question, but her tongue seemed paralyzed. It was only after a minute or two had elapsed that she found utterance.

"I discovered it in a secret recess of my late husband's escritoire," said she, "and those notes were also in the same place," handing him the little love missives before alluded to.

"Alice," cried he suddenly, after reading the letters, "Mr. Peterson's name was George, and 'G.' may stand for that name."

"It must be so," said she, "and see, on the back of the likeness, in his own handwriting he calls her his 'little wife.'"

"Oh that he was still living, so that this mystery might be cleared," said Howard.

The lady sat in silence and deep thought, while the young man seemed lost for a time in earnest and rapt contemplation of the portrait of his departed mother. He was startled by the words of his beloved, and looked up as one in a dream.

"Howard," said she, as if inspired by a sudden brilliant idea, "would it not be advisable to have the benefit of Mr. Williams' suggestions in this most deplorable dilemma?"

"He might be able to aid us. I shall mention the matter to him."

"Go to him at once," said Mrs. Peterson; bring him here, and between us three we may be able to see daylight through this apparent darkness."

Howard Malcolm departed upon his mission at once, and speedily returned with the lawyer.

"Mr. Williams," said Alice, arising to greet him, "we are in a state of perplexity out of which we can see no outlet, so we we have summoned you to our aid."

The lawyer smiled, and asked to be enlightened.

Something calculated to aid him in unraveling the mystery was related to him, and at the conclusion Howard placed the locket in his hand.

"This locket I have seen before," said he, looking at Mrs. Peterson, why did you omit mentioning it to me when you handed me that portrait?"

"That locket belongs to Howard Malcome," replied the lady. "I never saw it before to-day."

A strange expression swept across the lawyer's countenance as the lady uttered these words; he seemed perplexed for a moment then a light seemed to break upon him.

"Where is that portrait?" asked he. Howard passed it to him.

"See," said the lawyer, holding the locket in one hand, and the portrait in the other. "You will perceive that if there were an inside to this locket this likeness would just fit into it."

The young people admitted the possibility, and deemed it strange that neither had noticed it before.

"Now," continued the lawyer, "this locket, which really looks more like a medallion to you, I have seen in the possession of George Peterson, lately deceased."

Both Howard and Alice started at these words.

"And," continued the speaker, "if I am not mistaken it contains, or did contain, the likeness of the then owner, George Peterson."

The astonishment they felt was plainly depicted on the countenances of both listeners.

"So neither of you have opened it yet?" continued Mr. Williams.

"No," answered Howard. "Though it has been in my possession these many years I have never discovered its secret. Yet when my mother gave it to me I remember she called it a *locket*, but since, I have often thought that it would be more appropriate to call it a medal or medallion."

"I know how it is opened, see," said Mr. Williams.

The lawyer took out a penknife and opening it he pressed the point on a small steel circle within the ring of the locket and it flew apart, dividing in half; a paper fell from it and fluttered to the floor. On the inside there appeared the likeness of a young man. The lawyer at once pronounced it to be the portrait of George Peterson at the age of twenty-two or twenty-five years.

In the meanwhile Howard had picked up the paper which had fallen from the locket, and as he cast his eyes over it he exclaimed,

"Thank God! the mystery is explained!" It was the certificate of marriage between George Peterson and Cora ——.

The lawyer was no less astonished than his two young friends were at this unexpected discovery.

"This explains why my dear mother requested me to come to this village," observed the young man.

The lawyer quietly took the ivory likeness of Mrs. Peterson, (for so Howard's mother must now be called) and placed it into the locket. It fitted to a nicety.

"All the proofs are clear as day," observed he, "this likeness has been in the locket, and for reasons which we may never know, displaced and fell again into the possession of George Peterson." "Now, Howard, and my dear madam, entrust all this business to me, I shall hunt up the clergyman and witnesses to this marriage, and we shall astonish Master Malcolm as soon as he has never been astonished before. Mrs. Peterson at this moment burst into a clear ringing laugh which caused both gentlemen to gaze at her in surprise, and on being pressed to explain the cause of her merriment she reprie'd:

"Oh, Mr. Williams, such a bright idea entered my mind, such a joke—I might say; but I will not let you into the secret until"—here she blushed deeply—"until I am the wife of dear Howard!" she finally concluded.

Neither of the gentlemen urged her any further, and after half an hour's further pleasant chat, Mr. Williams departed taking with him the locket, portraits and marriage certificate, saying, he would at once enter upon the task so important to the young folks.

* * * * * * * *

The wedding was a quiet affair, and took place at the residence of the bride: few were invited, and those only the most intimate friends of Alice and Mr. Williams, and the gossips of Stockport were in their element once more; and as the terms of the late Mr. Peterson's will were well known, there were many who pronounced Mrs. Peterson a "foolish thing," to prefer a handsome man to a snug fortune.

Gregory Peterson was on one of his orgies in the neighboring town when the event took place. But he was soon apprised of it, and he roared in drunken triumph when the intelligence reached him.

Had he seen the quiet smiles of triumph on the faces of Mr. Williams, and the newly wedded couple when he announced his intention to call early to claim his property, he might have felt some fear that all was not as clear in the way to the forfeited inheritance as he supposed.

But when he finally made the demand through his lawyer, the answer that was returned created consternation and dismay.

* * * * * * * *

It was a bright May morning, the hour was ten, when Mr. Joshua Tarleton was admitted into the sitting-room of the Peterson mansion.

The lady received him with smiles, while her husband merely bowed to the lawyer's obsequious salutation.

"Mrs. Malcolm—began the lawyer, when he was quickly interrupted by the lady, who said:

"Mrs. Peterson, if you please."

For a moment the lawyer was startled, then he gave a low chuckle as he remarked:

"A very good joke to think that a lady forgets her new name. However, it does not matter, Mrs. Malcolm——"

"*Mrs. Peterson, if you please sir!*"

This time the lady spoke with severity and decided emphasis upon every word.

The lawyer stood aghast. He knew not how to proceed, and for once in his life was nonplussed.

Mrs. Peterson took pity on the embarrassed man and thus delivered herself.

"You have doubtless been sent here by your client, Mr. Gregory Peterson, in reference to the property which he thinks to secure on account of my marriage."

"Just so," was the short reply.

"I refer you to my legal adviser, Mr. Williams," said the lady, "he will probably explain to your entire satisfaction, and Mr. Gregory Peterson's extreme mortification, that I shall keep all the property that was bequeathed to me by my former husband. So, good morning, sir."

And the lady made a low bow, then left the room. Mr. Tarleton gazed after her like one stupified, then crushing his hat on his head, he hurried from the house with rapid strides, in the direction of lawyer Williams' office.

* * * * * * * *

The remainder can be told in a few words. The cause of Mrs. Peterson's merriment was the fact that by wedding Howard Malcolm Peterson she would be able to retain possession of the property which would have been forfeited had she changed her surname.

Mr. Tarleton and Mr. Williams had quite a heated discussion over the singular complication, but the latter blankly remarked that the lady had not forfeited her rights by marrying.

"She still retains the name of Peterson," said he, "and if you think you can make good your cause, proceed at once. The will is evidence enough for any intelligent jury; it does not say one word about *remaining a widow*; it merely says, 'The property to be held by her while she retains the name of Peterson.' Now, Mr. Tarleton, in the words of Boss Tweed, 'What are you going to do about it?'"

Mr. Tarleton gave it up, and when he explained matters to his client, and listened to his impotent ravings, he simply said:

"Mr. Peterson, everything is against you. If you should go to law you would lose the suit, as well as the money required to contest the will. We are simply the victims of a Woman's Wit."

THE END.

OATHS are vulgar, senseless, offensive, impious; they leave a noisome trail upon the lips, and a stamp of odium upon the soul. They are inexcusable. They gratify no sense, while they outrage taste and dignity.

MOTHER GOOSE.

BY S. A. M. MOSS.

There is, some where a saying that there are young men, and it may be, old ones too, who think that if they were born in Boston, there is no need of their ever being born again. The inhabitants of Boston can lay claim to a good many proud laurels, and gay cap feathers, and nobody wants to deny that Boston is "the hub of the universe;" but when Boston comes to lay claim to Mother Goose, she lays claim to what she can't begin to prove was ever here.

Several good people have of late endeavored to make it appear that Mother Goose was Boston lady; that her name was Elizabeth Foster, otherwise, Goose; that she reared six children of her own, and ten of the first Mrs. Goose's, besides any desirable number belonging to other people, hence, it is reasoned, she wrote of the "Old Woman who Lived in a Shoe." Still, according to the biographical sketches of her that have recently been published, she lived in anything but a shoe; indeed, they lead us to believe that her home was not only one of respectability and roominess, but of affluence.

Now it is to be presumed, and may be proved, that there are a great many good and wise people in the world, both in and out of Boston, who rejoice in the name of Goose, and some of them may even have written poems, but our Mother Goose, the Mother Goose of the world, we know wasn't born in Boston.

The ancients believed her to be the daughter of Momus and Minerva. Momus was the god of ridicule, and it is said, was banished from his own sphere, to this, because he ridiculed whatever the other gods did until they could no longer endure his presence, and he related fully how they started him on his journey hither, but it is to be presumed they fetched him to the edge of the planet and shoved him off. A very easy and sensible way to dispose of criminals.

Whether Minerva was a schoolmate and champion of his there, and meeting him here in poverty and disgrace, remembered, (mind, she was the goddess of memory) the union was a bore, and Mother Goose, like a dutiful daughter, accompanied or followed them to earth, does not appear.

All we know is, that while Minerva was instructing the Greeks in various useful arts, Momus was spending his time and talents somewhere; it is safely to be presumed, in watching over the education of his gifted daughter, and in teaching to men the art of faultfinding.

Long before Boston was endowed with place and name, the children of other lands listened to and loved the music of the melodies of Mother Goose. The little Chinee, and the fair babes of the far Orient, knew of her and blessed her name before this new world had a written history or its people a living voice.

As the sweet singer, mother of poetry, and friend of song, we have known and loved her long, but no land can claim her, no people can say "she is ours."

Her poems are truly concise, witty, brilliant, fascinating, prophetical and famous. They charm the ignorant and delight the learned, and the pens of critics even, have often been wielded in their favor.

To the genuine poems of the real Mother Goose, however, have no doubt been from time to time added those of other lesser poets, and there is need of a MacPherson to collect and arrange the true and discard the false; and there is need of a Blair to vindicate that MacPherson.

"Mother Goose" was no more born in Boston, than "Ossian" was born in Boston; and as it is not known where Ossian was born, it is a wonder that Boston does not lay claim to him, indeed, there is no reason why the future inhabitants of that forsaken metropolis may not as wisely and justly claim Ossian, as the present ones claim Mother Goose.

CURIOUS ADVENTURES OF A RING.

Among other interesting stories of lost rings, the following is related of an officer, who bought a valuable diamond just after the Indian mutiny. The officer had it set in a ring, and wore it for several years quite safely; but one day, chancing to be in London, he went into a shop to buy a pair of gloves, and looking at the ring on his little finger, he observed that the setting was empty, the diamond gone. He examined his glove, his pockets, the floor of the shop; no trace of the stone was to be seen, and so he gave it up as lost. However, he mentioned the matter at his club, and told the club-room that he would offer offering £50 reward to any one who should find the diamond. A day or two afterward the stone was brought to him. It had been found by one of the housemaids, in a darkish passage that led to the billiard room. The reward was gladly paid, and the diamond taken to the jeweler's to be once more firmly replaced in the ring. Again some years passed on. The officer had been back to India, and was on furlough in this country, and had gone to Scotland to shoot, with friends who had taken a moor in the highlands. One hot August day he had been out for several hours, tramping over miles and miles of close heather, grouse-shooting. He was still walking, when a covey of birds rose a little way off. He raised his gun to take hand. So, good morning." aim, fired, heard to fall on his ring, and he saw that the setting was once more empty. Stopping to look at it the birds got away, and he laid down the gun on the heather beside him, and carefully examined the place where he stood, with a very feeble hope of finding the glittering stone. He stooped for his gun, and the thought flashed into his mind: "I'll turn out the charge—the thing is just possible." He did so; drew the wad, and then shook out the contents of the barrel, shot, powder, and—the diamond! It had slipped unnoticed into the muzzle when he was loading, and but for the lucky chance that had caused him to remark its absence from the ring it would have been fired away the next moment. Another visit to the jeweler, and the ring resumed its place on the finger of its owner, and three or four years passed away. The officer had again returned to India, and was with his regiment, which was encamped near Lucknow, on the portions of some other regiments being close to them. He was acting as Adjutant to the general in command, and was writing at a small table placed close to the door of his tent. As time had passed rapidly over the paper, his troublesome diamond once more dropped from its setting and fell on the table beside him. Being in a hurry, he merely uttered an angry exclamation, pushed the stone close to the inkstand, and went on with his writing. Presently a messenger came to say that the General wished to see him immediately. He forgot all about the stone, threw on his uniform, buckled on his sword, and started at once for the quarters of the commanding officer. He was detained some little time, and when he returned to his own tent he looked directly for the diamond, which he had meanwhile reccollected, but it was gone. A thief had been there during his absence, and had seen and appropriated the stone; and he never saw or heard of it again, though he offered a liberal reward for its restoration.

NEWS NOTES.

THE people of Massachusetts took out of the savings banks some $2,000,000 more last year than they put in.

BEETHOVEN'S monument will be erected at Vienna on the 26th of March, the fiftieth anniversary of the composer's death.

RAIN, formerly very rare in Lower Egypt, has become frequent in Alexandria and Cairo, in consequence of the extensive planting of the mulberry in that vicinity.

THERE is talk in London of setting up Cleopatra's needle in Northumberland avenue. To remove the obelisk from Alexandria and re-erect it will cost at least $35,000.

A ROYAL decree has been issued at Brussels prohibiting the importation into Belgium of horned cattle and sheep from Germany, England, Russia, Austria, and Turkey.

AGENTS of landowners in Southern Russia are said to be in this country making heavy purchases of agricultural machinery. They nearly all come from Western manufactures.

THE British Council has issued further stringent orders against the importation into Great Britain from Germany and Belgium of cattle, hay, hides, horns, fat, hoofs, and fresh meat.

CHICAGO, in 1876, reported 199 business failures, with liabilities amounting to $9,164,766; Boston, 268 failures, with liabilities of $10,310,000, and New York 687 failures, with liabilities at $33, 344,018.

THE number of brewers engaged in the United States in the manufacture of fermented liquors, during 1876, numbered 3,286, and they produced an aggregate of 9,000,000 barrels of beer.

NORFOLK has become the second cotton port in the United States. How rapidly it has advanced may be known from the fact that, ten years ago, Norfolk exported only 683 bales of cotton to European ports.

CALIFORNIA'S exports for the year just amounted to $60,421,971, being $49,737,260 treasure and $30,684,711 merchandise. There were few failures in San Francisco or the State. The yield of precious metals was $18,615,807, against $17,753,151 in 1875.

ACCORDING to the Kansas City *Price Current* the cattle drive from southwestern Texas during the year was 317,698. Of this number 250,253 were driven north of Kansas and to Indian reservations. The indications are that the drive for 1877 will be fully equal to that of last year.

DURING the year 1876 Harrisburg had less loss by fire than any city of its size in the United States. The whole amount was only $61,197. The fire department of the town consists of seven companies, five steam fire engine companies, one hose company, and one hook and ladder company.

SIGNOR BLITZ the well-known, ventriloquist, died last week, in Philadelphia, from acute bronchial irritation, entirely caused by the practices of ventriloquism. Few persons were more generally known than the deceased. His slight-of-hand performances are familiar to thousands of the readers of the Four.

It is computed that in less than a month nearly six millions of people in Bengal, Madras and the adjacent country must trust to the government for the common necessaries of life. The famine which now threatens a large part of the British Indian Empire is of such a character as to challenge the attention of the whole civilized world. In 1866 more than 175,000 people died of hunger in India in a few months.

THE total of all kinds of tea shipped to Great Britain from Chinese ports was 123,-417,091 pounds, of which 4,446,154 pounds were green teas. In the preceding season (1875–76) the total exportation was 122,-678,978 pounds, of which 3,419,077 pounds were green teas. The total amount sent from all Chinese ports to the United States in the season of 1876–77 was 13,374,005 pounds, of which nearly half was green tea. While in 1875–76 the exportation was 10,-603,808 pounds, of which more than half was green tea.

THE whaling season for 1876 was fairly successful. The arrivals at New Bedford show nineteen profitable voyages, while fourteen resulted in a loss, this being fully up to the average of late years. The present whaling fleet, after deducting the recent losses in the Arctic Ocean, is one hundred and seventy-two vessels against one hundred and sixty-nine January 1, 1876, one hundred and sixty-three in 1875, and the number at sea January 1, 1877, was one hundred and forty-six vessels against one hundred and thirty-seven a year ago, and one hundred and nineteen in 1875.

THE International Exhibition has advanced so far as the issue of an official bulletin, a handsome pamphlet, which explains the character of the scheme and gives all necessary information to exhibitors, whether domestic or foreign. A lithographic plan shows the new arrangements of the Main Building, a prominent feature of which is an open space in the centre, with accommodation for eight thousand people, and tiers of seats for a chorus and orchestra extending from the floor to the organ gallery. This will make a noble place for concerts. The annexes are limited to paintings; the machinery will be in the southwest portion of the building, the agricultural and some minor exhibits in the northwestern portion, while the whole character of the building is adapted to the industrial display. The plan seems unexceptionable, and we shall before long have an opportunity to judge of its execution.

MR. JOHN ANDERSON'S gift of Penikese Island, in Buzzard's Bay, to Professor Agassiz, on which to found the Anderson School of Natural History, has finally come to naught. He put in the island at $100,000 and gave $50,000 in bonds. The enthusiastic naturalist gratefully accepted it, and built and fitted up and the school opened. But the fund was hardly more than enough to pay for the houses necessary and to keep them in order. Agassiz's energy raised enough to pay the deficiency. He died. Mr. Anderson's purse-strings were tightened, and he refused to help support it. The younger Professor Agassiz, who had succeeded his father, made one more effort, and offered to pay half the total expense if there were students enough to pay the remainder. These were not forthcoming, and Mr. Agassiz has given up the island, which is really valueless. Mr. Anderson's gift in cash amounted to a little more than $45,000, and he had all the bonor. Professor Agassiz gave all his collections to the museum, and his family, besides their time and talents, have given to it without conditions over a quarter of a million of money.

PERUSIAN PAINS AND ALL ASTHMATIC OR BRONCHIAL AFFECTIONS are soon relieved by that certain remedy for Coughs and Colds, Dr. Jayne's expectorant.

WATCHING.

Watching from the threshold
As the timbrel floats
Lingers o'er the hillsides,
Sunset's crimson blush;
Watching for the coming
Of the form, in vain;
Listening for the footsteps—
Will he come again?

Watching from the lattice
As the twilight gleams,
And the shadows deepen,
Over hills and streams.
Frame the azure opal
In the west, afar,
(I) morning o'er the hill-tops,
Rides the evening star.

Voices from the valley,
Music on the wind,
Echo far and faintly
As the starlight climbs.
Through the gathering darkness
Watch I still and wait;
Keeper for the coming—
Tarries he so late.

Watching, ever watching,
For the smile that wreathes,
For the merry eye-glance,
And the tone that breathes.
Heart, how sweet thy language.
Eyes alone can tell;
Watching, ever watching,
As the shadows fell.

EDINA.

BY MRS. HENRY WOOD,

AUTHOR OF "EAST LYNNE."

(The story was commenced in No. 12. Vol. 38. Back numbers can always be obtained.)

CHAPTER XXVII.—(*Continued.*)

Charley made no remark. The very name of Eagle's Nest would give him a turn.

"And it is nothing but work all day," went on Alice. "Lessons this hour, music that, writing next. Oh, it is wearisome!"

"But don't grumble, my dears," interposed Mrs. Raynor. "It might have been so much worse. After the strange turn our affairs took, we might now be without a roof's shelter over our heads and a morsel of bread to eat. So far as I can see, we should have been, but for Edina."

The tears were raining down Mrs. Raynor's cheeks. Alice started up and threw her arms round her in repentance. "Forgive me, dear mamma, forgive me! I was wrong to speak so repiningly."

"You were wrong, dear Alice. In dwelling so much upon the advantages we have lost, you overlook the mercies remaining to us. And they are mercies. We are together under one house; we have the prospect of making a good living."

"Yes," acquiesced Charley, throwing regrets behind him. "It is a very nice home indeed, compared with what might have been."

"And I think we may yet be happy in it," added Mrs. Raynor.

Alice strove to think so too, and put on a cheerful face. But the old days were ever present to her; and she never recalled the old hopes, connected with William Stane, but her heart turned sick and faint in its hopeless despair.

"It will be your turn next, Charles," observed Edina, taking the opportunity of speaking to him the following morning when they were alone.

"My turn?" repeated Charles, vaguely; fully sure that he knew what she meant, but not choosing to know it.

"To do something for yourself," added Edina. "You cannot intend to live upon your mother."

"Of course I do not, Edina. How stupid you are!"

"And the question is, what is that something to be?" she continued, passing over his compliment to herself.

"I should like to go into the army, Edina." Edina shook her head. Her longer experience of life, her habits of forethought, enabled her to see obstacles that younger people did not.

"Even if you had the *money* to purchase a commission, Charley——"

"But I did not think of purchasing. I should like to get one given to me."

"Is there a chance of it?"

Charles did not reply. He was standing before the window, gazing abstractedly at a young butcher boy, dashing about in a light cart for his morning orders. There was not very much chance of it, he feared, but there might be a little.

"Let us suppose that you had the commission, Charley, that it arrived here for you this very day direct from the Horse Guards—or whatever the place may be that issues them," pursued Edina. "Would it benefit you?"

"Benefit me?"

"I mean, could you take it up? How would you find your necessary outfit?—regimentals cost a great deal. But that would not be the chief consideration, for you say perhaps that you might obtain them on credit and pay as you could. I have heard that it takes every officer more than his pay to live. I have often thought that were I an officer it should not take me more; but it may be that I am mistaken. You would not have anything besides, Charley?"

"Oh, I expect I should get along."

"Take it at the best, you would have nothing to spare. I had thought that you might choose something which would enable you to help them here at home."

"Of course. It is what I should wish to do."

"Alfred must be educated; and little Robert too as he comes on. Your mother may not be able to do this. And I do not see that you will have it in your power to aid her if you enter the army."

Charles began scoring the window pane with a pencil that he held, knowing not what to answer. In truth, his own interests and views as to the future were as vague and purposeless, that to dwell on it gave him the nightmare.

"What should you propose, Edina?"

"A situation," replied Edina promptly "in some good city house."

But for the obligations they were just now under to Edina, Mr. Charles Raynor would have scouted at her for the suggestion. It suited neither him nor his pride. A situation in some city house! That meant a clerk, he supposed. To write at desks and go on errands!

"I wish you'd not talk so, Edina," he peevishly said, wishing he might box her ears. "Did you ever hear of a Raynor becoming a gentleman's book-of-all-trades?"

"Did you ever hear of a Raynor with no means of living?" retorted Edina. "No profession, and no money? Circumstances alter cases, Charley."

"Circumstances can't make a common man a gentleman; and they can't make a gentleman take up the rule of a common man."

"Can't they! I think they often do. However, Charley, I will say no more just now, for I perceive you are not in the humor for it. Consider the matter with yourself. Don't depend upon the commission, for indeed I don't see that you have a chance of one; put it out of your thoughts, and look to other ways and means. I shall be leaving you in a day or two, you know, and by that time you will perhaps have decided on something."

Edina went into the school-room, and Charles stood where he was. Alfred came in with his Latin books. Mrs. Raynor was going to send Alfred to a day-school close by; but it did not open for another week or two, and meanwhile Charles made a show of keeping him to his Latin.

"What am I to do this morning, Charley?"

"Copy that last exercise over again, lad. It was so badly written yesterday I could not read it."

Alfred's pen went scratching over the copy-book. Charles remained at the window deep in thought. He had no more wish to be living on his mother than any other good son has; but he did not see where he could go, or what he could do. The doubts had lain on his mind during these recent days more than was agreeable for its peace. His whole heart was set upon a commission; but in truth he did not feel much more sanguine of obtaining one than Edina seemed to feel.

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"Colonel Cockburn, sir?" was the answer to his inquiry. "I don't think he is in town."

"Not in town!" cried Charles, his ardor suddenly damped. "Why do you think that?"

"He has not been here for a day or two, sir; and he conclude he is either absent or ill. The Colonel is sometimes laid up with gout for a week together."

"Can you tell me where he lives? I'll go and see."

"In St. James's Street," replied the man, giving at the same time the number.

To St. James's Street proceeded Charles, in which the Colonel occupied rooms, and saw the landlady. Colonel Cockburn was at Bath; had gone to stay with a brother who was lying there ill.

"What a dreadful bother!" thought Charles. "Cockburn must have a whole regiment of brothers!" And he stood in indecision.

"Will the Colonel be back soon?" inquired he.

"I don't at all know," was the landlady's answer. "Should he be detained in Bath he may come on to Bath before October. The Colonel always leaves London the end of July. Sometimes he leaves earlier than that."

"What on earth am I to do?" cried Charles, partly aloud, his vivid hopes melting considerably. "My business with him was urgent."

"Should you write to him?" suggested the landlady.

"I suppose I must—if you have his address. But I ought to see him."

She took an envelope from the mantelpiece, on which was written an address in the Crescent, Bath. Charles copied it down, and went out. He stood a moment considering what he should do next. The day was so fine and the town so full of life, that to go hence to that poking old southern suburb seemed a sin and a shame. So he decided to make a day of it, now he was there, and began with the Royal Academy.

Time slips away in the most wonderful manner when sight-seeing, and the day was over before Charles thought it half was through. When he reached home, it was past nine. The children were in bed; his mother also had gone there with a headache; Edina and Alice were sewing by lamp-light. Alice was at some fancy work; Edina was mending a torn pinafore; one of Jacko's.

While talking his supper, Charles told them of his ill-luck in regard to Colonel Cockburn. And while he was away, Alice had got paper and ink and began to write to him.

"She is sure to have heard of our misfortunes ere now, as to the future were so vague and purposeless, that to dwell on it gave him the nightmare.

"What should you propose, Edina?"

"A situation," replied Edina promptly "in some good city house."

But for the obligations they were just now under to Edina, Mr. Charles Raynor would have scouted at her for the suggestion. It suited neither him nor his pride. A situation in some city house! That meant a clerk, he supposed. To write at desks and go on errands!

"I wish you'd not talk so, Edina," he peevishly said, wishing he might box her ears. "Did you ever hear of a Raynor becoming a gentleman's book-of-all-trades?"

"Did you ever hear of a Raynor with no means of living?" retorted Edina. "No profession, and no money? Circumstances alter cases, Charley."

"Circumstances can't make a common man a gentleman; and they can't make a gentleman take up the rule of a common man."

"Can't they! I think they often do. However, Charley, I will say no more just now, for I perceive you are not in the humor for it. Consider the matter with yourself. Don't depend upon the commission, for indeed I don't see that you have a chance of one; put it out of your thoughts, and look to other ways and means. I shall be leaving you in a day or two, you know, and by that time you will perhaps have decided on something."

Edina went into the school-room, and Charles stood where he was. Alfred came in with his Latin books. Mrs. Raynor was going to send Alfred to a day-school close by; but it did not open for another week or two, and meanwhile Charles made a show of keeping him to his Latin.

"What am I to do this morning, Charley?"

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If I Were a Boy Again.

BY JAMES T. FIELDS.

Let me tell you, my young friends, some of the things I would do if I were a boy again; some of the things I have neglected and I would strive to accomplish if it were in my power to begin all over anew.

When we are no longer young we look back and see where we might have done better and learned more, and the things we have neglected rise up and mortify us every day of our lives. May I enumerate some of the important matters, large and small, that if I were a boy again I would be more particular about?

I think I would use my left hand just as freely as my right one—so that if anything happened to lame either of them, the other would be all ready to write and "handle things," just as if nothing had occurred. There is no reason in the world why both hands should not be educated alike. A little practice would soon render one set of fingers just as expert as the other, and I have known people who never could tell when a thing was to be done, which particular hand ought to do it, but the hand nearest the object to it took of it, and did the office desired.

I would acknowledge myself to go about in the dark, and not be obliged to have a lamp or candle on every occasion. Too many of us are slaves to the daylight, and decline to move forward an inch where everything is visible. One of the most cheerful persons I ever knew was a blind old man who had lost his sight at sea during his early manhood. He went everywhere, and could find many more easily than I could. When his wife wanted a spool of cotton or a pair of scissors from up stairs, the gallant old gentleman went without saying a word, and brought it. He never asked any one to read him this or that object, but seemed to have the instinct of knowing just where it was and how to get at it.

Surprised at my power of finding things, I asked him one day for an explanation, and he told me that when he was a boy on board a vessel it occurred to him that he might some time or other be deprived of his sight, and he resolved to begin early in life to rely more on a sense of feeling than he had ever done before. And so he used to wander, by the way of practice, all over the ship in black midnight, going down below, and climbing around anywhere everywhere, that he might, in case of blindness, not become wholly helpless and of no account in the world. In this way he had educated himself to do without eyes when it became his lot to live a sightless man.

I would learn the art of using tools of various sorts. I think I would insist on learning some trade, even if I knew there would be no occasion to follow it when I grew up.

What a pleasure it is in after life to be able to make something, as the saying is; to construct a neat box to hold one's pen and paper, or a pretty cabinet for a sister's library, or to frame a favorite engraving for a Christmas present to a dear, kind mother. What a loss not to know how to mend a chair that refuses to stand up only because it needs a few tacks and a bit of leather here and there. Some of us cannot even drive a nail straight, and should we attempt to saw off an obtrusive piece of wood, ten to one we should lose a finger in the operation.

It is a pleasant relaxation from books and study to work many hours every day in a blacksmith shop; and my friend, the learned and lovable Professor Oliver Wendell Holmes, finds such a comfort in "mending things" when his active brain is tired, that he sometimes breaks a piece of furniture on purpose that he may have the relief of putting it together again much better than it was before. He is as good a mechanic as he is poet; but there is nothing mechanical about his poetry, as you all know who have read his delightful pieces. An English author of great ingenuity once said not long ago, "Professor Holmes is writing the best English of our time." And I could not help adding, "Yes, and inventing the best Stereoscope, too!"

I think I would ask permission—if I had happened to be born in a city—to have the opportunity of spending all my vacations in the country, that I might learn the names of the trees and flowers and birds. We are, as a people, sadly ignorant of all accurate rural knowledge. We guess at many country things, but we are certain of very few.

It is inexcusable in a grown-up person, like my amiable neighbor Simpkins, who lives from May to November on a farm of sixty acres, in a beautiful wooded country, not to know a hickory from a beech, or a bobolink from a catbird. He once handed me a bunch of pansies, and called them violets, and on another occasion he mistook sweet peas for geraniums.—*The Golden Rule.*

CHIP.

It's a very short name, but then he is only a very little fellow, and a longer one would hardly fit him. He and I have been friends for more than seven years, and yet, strange to tell, he knows nothing at all of astronomy or mathematics, and couldn't square the circle, even if you offered to to count him in as the next President. But he is bright and intelligent and an excellent musician, with a voice like Annie Laurie's, "low and sweet."

Chip is a Dutchman—short and stumpy—in his little Dutch cassock. I believe he came from the Hartz mountains, and when I bought him was a year old. He was then a charming performer, and could execute with ease and grace all the trills and other accomplishments for which good German canaries are noted. In color he is a perfect yellow—what fanciers call a clear buff—nearly bird-white, not any shade except one dark wing feather which appears after every second moult. This year his plumage is perfect, and although his voice is not so full and flexible as it was seven years ago, Chip is still a capital little songster.

I bought him in the Autumn. In the following Spring the poor fellow seemed lonely, and I decided to give him a mate. The bird-stores were carefully searched, but not with any marked success. I suppose I ought to have asked Chip what sort of a wife he would like, but as I couldn't talk Dutch, and Chip didn't know enough of English, this was out of the question. At length I found what I fancied would be just the bird. She was about the same age as Chip, but a little larger, and of a lovely fawn or cinnamon color. Nan (for that was the name I afterward gave her) was robust, active, healthy, had a bright eye, and, like so many other young ladies, was "real handsome." At least I thought so, and to tell the truth so did Chip. When I introduced her to him, I am sure he fell in love with her at first sight, just as Anthony did with Cleopatra. Their first meeting was very interesting—I mean Chip and Nan's—I didn't happen to be present when the other two met. It was late in the evening that I took her out of the little wooden affair in which canaries are imported, and put her in Chip's cage.

Most canaries are rude to visitors, and I expected to see the lord of the castle give the stranger a good thrashing. Not so. He hopped around her two or three times, thought her, I am sure, a perfect beauty, and straightway began kissing her, and in a low, twittering voice, whispering all sorts of nice things in her ear. From that time they were ever the most lovable of companions. Darby and Joan could be no greater. I don't recollect their having once quarrelled, although for three consecutive years they took the care and responsibility of bringing up large families. The nearest approach to it was when Chip would occasionally be lazy and neglectful in the breeding season—birds will be birds, you know, and even boys and girls are naughty now and then—and Nan had to remind her mate of his duty by a little wholesome scolding-to.

Nan died last Summer—a victim to the great heat. She proved an excellent wife and mother, and never seemed happier than when she had a nest full of little ones to look after.

HERE AND THERE.

THE colder the weather, the less the thermometer mounts it.

THE "Raven" is the name of a popular dressing for the hair. A very appropriate name for Poe-made.

"THE peanut crop in Tennessee is 800,000 bushels." This is a kind of Munch-ehawsen story.—*Boston Post.*

THE New York *Times* has an article on "American Humor," in which Ayer's pills are not even mentioned.

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2—Oliver Twist and Christmas Stories.
3—Dombey and Son.
4—Martin Chuzzlewit.
5—David Copperfield.
6—Curiosity Shop and American Notes.
7—Nicholas Nickleby.
8—David Copperfield.
9—Barnaby Rudge and Edwin Drood.
10—Little Dorrit.
11—Tale of Two Cities, Hard Times and Additional Christmas Stories.
12—Bleak House.
13—Great Expectations and Sketches by Boz.
14—In the Days of My Youth. By Amelia B. Edwards.
15—Charlotte Ackerman. By Otto Muller.
16—The Cruse of Berny. By Mme. de Girardin.
17—Jean Gautier, Student and Merry.
18—The Son of an Organ Grinder. By Maria Sophie Schwartz.
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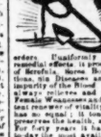

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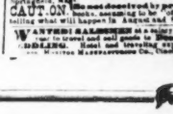

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THE FASHIONS.

Although we are just in the midst of winter very reign there are rumors of spring fashions. Some of the popular color, the possible shape of hair and bonnets, and whether plain fabrics or striped or plaided will be most worn.

So we go on, scarcely in one season before we anticipate another.

We do not intend just yet to divulge many details of the spring gossips, which a "bird of the air" has whispered in our ears, because we think it a bad plan to encourage such an anticipatory spirit in our fair friends, but out of "sweet charity" we will just relieve such anxious minds concerning the shape of the coming bonnet, and say that it promises to be wide of rim, and comfortably adjusting itself to the head.

Plaids and stripes will not be worn as much as cameo shades of one color.

In costume we have seen a very pretty street suit of

LONDON SMOKE CLOTHS,

combined with silk of a similar shade.

There was no overskirt worn with this costume, the wider or principal skirt being trimmed to simulate an overskirt.

Two knife-pleated flounces, one seven, the other five inches deep, trimmed the lower edge of the skirt.

The lower one was of the cashmere, the upper one of silk.

The front and two narrow side breadths on each side of it were trimmed at intervals with knife pleatings alternately placed the one of silk the other of cashmere. Bands of blue silk, and cashmere, headed the pleatings.

A silk band above the cashmere pleating, a cashmere band above the silk pleating.

Rows of silk and cashmere were placed on each side of the pleatings.

Imitary scarfs of cashmere and silk were set in on each side, two on a side, and were gracefully disposed across the back widths.

The waist was a plain sleeveless cuirass of cashmere, pointed back and front, and had sleeves of silk with deep cashmere cuffs, laid in fine knife pleating.

Collar of silk with broken points.

Buttons of grey silk covered with crochet pattern.

A suitable hat to be worn with this costume was smoke grey felt with wide rim, under the border of which an inch wide bias of dark cardinal silk was placed.

The back of the rim was turned up with loops of smoke-colored silk, and a grey tip.

A long willowy plume of grey was set in three loops, and fell forward over the crown.

A charming dinner or reception costume has been shown us, of a pale blue, slightly improved with green, just enough so to seem it, if we may so express the idea.

The combination of demasse and plain *faille* of the same shade is used.

The lower skirt is cut on *trainc* and has a deep knife pleating at the bottom, above which is a bias flounce, headed in its turn with an upright ruffle knife pleated.

The over dress is cut in the form of a polonaise, laced up behind, and having the high shoulder seams.

The front of the polonaise is of the demasse which extends downwards, forming a deep overskirt.

The sides of the overskirt are also of the demasse, being joined to the waist portion at the sides and back, and having such joining concealed by a folded scarf of plain *faille*.

This scarf is looped and mingled with the drapery of the back of the overskirt in a very graceful manner.

A deep fringe of mingled silk and chenille, the open work heading being of silk, and the four ball pendants being of chenille, edges the overskirt, and is also taken diagonally across the front from left to right.

The plain coat sleeves are of the plain silk with a bias fold at the wrist of demasse, from which depends a knife pleating of plain silk.

A plain, round, standing collar, finishes the neck.

Another pretty suit, appropriate for the promenade was shown in two shades of

HAVANNA BROWN.

This can be made either of silk or woolen goods.

The model was in vigogne, and had two knife pleated flounces at the bottom.

A deep polonaise, with a basque simulated in the upper part by a trimming of wide silk and gold galloon in a checkered pattern and having an *l'ose* border, formed the overdress.

The same wide galloon was carried down the centre of the front around the bottom, and defined two deep points on each side width.

A large bow of the palest shade of brown, edged and piped with seal having deep loops and ends, was placed high up on the left side, holding in place the pleats which looped back the front.

On the opposite side a deepened set of the two shades of brown piped with seal, was placed.

The sleeves were of the light shade, having knife pleated frills of the two shades falling over the hands, and headed by two bands of the galloon.

High square collar of the dark shade lined with the light, and piped with seal.

CUFFS AND COLLARS.

Diamonds and rubies are the favorite jewelry used now by fashionable ladies.

The French fashion for dressing the hair continues pile it up at the back, and have the pendant loops or braids falling low upon the neck behind, or else two long curls.

Pillow shams and tidies seem in antagonism to the prevailing taste in upholstery. Lace-edged by squares of blue or scarlet satin, are considered very elegant.

High combs are still worn.

Fur trimmings abound.

Felt hats are the thing for this weather.

Fashionable brides prefer cream colored silk to pure white now-a-days, especially if they happen to be brunettes.

Scotch costumes are again in vogue for the little men and women.

Gloves embroidered up the back seams are the latest novelty abroad.

Thanks are due Messrs Homer & Colladay for information received.

OUR WORK TABLE.

A very unique way of disposing of old strips and ends has been shown us, namely by working them into rugs, mats, etc.

The foundation material for such articles must be burlaps or coarse canvas.

The pieces to be used must be cut into strips and folded.

A steel crochet hook is also needed.

In working a pattern of roses, leaves, etc., match the colors as well as you can with the rags and scraps of cloth you have on hand, and cut and sort them.

When a color is to be used, fasten the strip of cloth on the under side of the canvas, as near the part of the leaf or flower which calls for its particular shade.

With your hook draw up on the upper side a loop of the color into every stitch needed.

Proceed in the same manner with the leaves, vines, etc., and for foundation or ground color, use a shade of drab, or else black, according to fancy. No matter if the texture of the straps be glossy, dull, woolen, cotton, all can be worked in and with most excellent effect.

These rugs and mats are both durable and handsome, and surely within the reach of all.

Every lady possessing any taste in needlework and a crochet needle and a coffee sack can be made to do service for foundation.

ANSWERS TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

MRS M K N., Lehigh Valley, Pennsylvania.—The pieces of red lace vary according to width, quality, etc. You were right in saying there are several different kinds of point lace, and your dressmaker contradicted you through ignorance. 2d. Yes, a velvet polonaise would be in good style for either a reception dress or the promenade.

Annette De L.—The cause of your hair falling out is the excessive use of oils in which you say you have indulged. Why use pomatum or oil at all? It is not a real habit to wear the head, soiling your bonnet lining, your collars, etc. We recommend for the present a horse's wash as a preventive. NIXON.

BY-AND-BY.

What will it matter by and by
Whether my path below was bright,
Whether it wound through dark or light,
Under a gray or a golden sky,
When I look back on it, by and by?

What will it matter by and by
Whether, unbridged, I forded alone,
Inasling my foot against a stone,
Missing the charge of the angel high,
Bidding me think of the by and-by?

What will it matter by and-by
Whether with laughing joy I went
Down through the years with a glad content!
Never believing, nay, not I,
Tears were in the sweeter by-and-by?

What will it matter by and-by
Whether with cheek to cheek I've lain
Close by the pallid angel, Pain,
Soothing myself through sob and sigh,
"All will be clearer by and-by?"

What will it matter? Naught, if I
Only am sure that I've tried,
Gloomy or gladdened, leads to God.
Questioning not of the how or the why,
If I but reach Him by and-by.

What will I care of the unshared sigh,
If, in my fear of slip or fall,
Closely I've clung to Christ through all.
Mindless how rough the path might lie,
Since He will smooth it by-and-by?

Ah! it will matter by and-by
Nothing but this: That Joy or Pain
Lifted me sky ward, helped to gain,
Yielded the shining rack, or smile, or sigh,
Heaven—home—all in all, by and-by.

FAITHFUL DORA.

The blood-red ribbons of the storm-threatening sunset, were fluttering in the west, the huge oak trees and pines of the forest were murmuring drowsily, and the one chimney of the little farm-house on the edge of the woods sent up its blue column of smoke, like a cheery hand beckoning to the way-worn traveler, over the hill.

And how bright and cozy the interior of the kitchen looked, as Dora Klein stood on the threshold, cold, hungry, and inexpressibly weary.

A little, blue-eyed and blonde-haired girl scarcely sixteen, with shy aspect, and a shrinking mien; she had walked all the way from the city, seeking vainly for work at the various habitations that she had passed, and now at nightfall, she was nearly discouraged.

"A girl?" said Mrs. Myers dubiously as Dora Klein preferred her meek request. "I did talk about hiring a girl, but I don't know anything about you."

Mrs. Myers turned to her husband, who sat by the fire, trotting a chubby two-year-old on his foot.

"What shall I do, James?"

"She's a total stranger," said Mr. Myers. "Hiring girls are necessary and worth out."

"Well, let her come in and stay all night a bowl of bread and milk and one night's lodging won't break us.

So Dora Klein was admitted into the farmer's little family—and so neat and handy was she about the place, so light and agile in her movements, so quick to learn, and steadfast to remember, that good-natured little Mrs. Myers had engaged her before she had been in the house a week.

"You women are so impulsive," said the honest farmer, shaking his head. "Suppose she should turn out bad?"

"How can she, James? said Mrs. Myers, indignantly. "She has a face as innocent as a baby's."

"My dear, I don't believe in physiognomy."

"Nor I, altogether, but I do believe in Dora Klein."

And as the days and weeks went by, Mr. Myers was obliged to confess to himself, that so far, at least, his wife's judgment, or rather instinct, had been correct.

The last November leaves were flittering down one clear, cold afternoon, when Mrs. Myers stood at the door, ready to join her husband and baby in the sleigh, to attend a merry making at the nearest village, some miles beyond, while Dora Klein was to remain at home to "keep house."

"Mind you feed the chickens at five o'clock, Dora, and don't forget the little calf in the pen; and if you have any extra time, you can just chop the heart and the apples for Saturday's mince pies, and——

"Come, wife, come!" called out her husband from the wagon.

"And if the house should catch fire, or anything," added this prudent little modern addition of Martha, "troubled with many cares," "remember, Dora, that the money is in an old stocking, under the old board, by the south window, and the silver in a pappanted box, close to it."

"Yes m'm," said Dora, kissing her hand to the laughing baby; "I'll remember."

"Some people would say, my dear, that I wasn't a very smart proceeding of yours," said Mr. Myers, as they drove away.

"What do you mean?" asked his wife.

"To leave that girl just where our valuables are kept."

"James! What an idea! Why I can trust Dora just as implicitly as I would trust myself."

Mr. Myers whistled, and drove, on and his wife was vexed with him for even thinking such a doubt of Dora Klein.

But as they were jogging slowly homeward in the November starlight, a neighbor hailed them, joyously, from the top of a load of barrels.

"I say, it's time you were home," said Nehemiah Hardbrake; "your gal's got company."

"What do you mean?" demanded Myers to the man, as he drew up and windows were all open, as I came by the cross roads, just where ye can see 'cross the meddler to your back door, and there was two or three men in the kitchen, and I think it was one of your folks, till I see your wagon just now."

James Myers looked at his wife.

Mrs. Myers' white, anxious face, returned the gaze.

"Dora is there," gasped the wife, "she would see that—that nothing has happened."

"Dora is there," assented Mr. Myers, "that's the reason I'm hurried. Hold the baby firm, and I'll see what speed there is left in old Dobbin."

How they rattled over the frosty road! Dobbin could scarcely be urged to a trot, and the old wood rushing past them like the scenic splendors of a panorama, while, to the anxious hearts of wife and husband, seemed to move forward as age.

The house was dark and silent when they reached it.

Mr. Myers flung the reins over the dashboard and sprang out.

"Dora! Dora Klein!" he called, but there was no answer save the faint echo of his own voice.

And when the lamp was lighted, it shone on a scene of dismay and confusion; but the first corner at which the farmer glanced, revealed to him that the loose boards beneath the south window, lifting hard been torn away, and the treasure nook which had held the silver spoons and the stocking full of bank notes—their little all—was empty.

"So much for your girl and her friends, Janie" said Mr Myers, in the bitterness of his first anger; and Mrs. Myers burst into tears, not so much, after all, at the loss of the money, although that was a serious enough matter, as to think that little Dora Klein, of whom she had unconsciously grown so fond, was unworthy of a kind thought.

That was one side of the little, everyday-life story at the cottage; and now let us take a peep at the other.

Her master and mistress had scarcely been gone an hour, and Dora was chopping away at the heart, singing some roundelay as she worked, when there was a creaking on the floor, and turning her head, she started to behold two tall, gruff-looking men in the room.

"Who are you?" demanded Dora, with feigned valor, "and what do you want?"

"Don't worry yourself, my lass," said the taller of the twain, gruffly, "and don't make any noise, if you don't want your neck twisted round like a chicken's."

With that he began turning himself in reconnoitering the cupboards and shelves, turned suddenly round with a volley of oaths.

"Nothing but tin and pewter," he snarled. "Where is the silver, girl?"

"We have no silver," said Dora, falteringly. "What should poor people like us do with silver?"

"The money, then? I know there is money, for I saw him come out of the bank yesterday morning with a wallet full. Quick, we haven't any time to lose."

"It's—it's upstairs, newed into the bottom of the feather-bed, in the spare room," hesitated Dora. "But you won't hurt me?"

"Would we hurt you for?" scornfully demanded the ruffian. "Go up stairs, Jack, and see, while I stay here to keep this girl from raising the neighborhood."

"How say ye, comrades! has he lost or won?" and the calm sweet voice of Magdalen broke the stillness.

"Won, won! and a chain of gold beades," said the taller, as such best above the sketch and beheld himself.

Long did the painter remain among them, loaded with proofs of their appreciation, and still in the splendid works of this great master, the tall graceful form in blue, the dark look, and moulded features, frequently appear—a monument of gratitude to Magdalen, the queen of the bandits.

HOW THE OYSTER BUILDS HIS SHELL

Mr. Frank Buckland, the naturalist, thus explains the manner in which the oyster builds his shell. The body of an oyster is a great weakling, apparently incapable of doing anything at all. Yet what a marvelous house an oyster builds around his delicate frame!

When an oyster is first born, he is a very simple dot, as it were; and yet he is born with his two shells upon him. For some unknown reason he always fixes himself on the under shell, and there he lies, till, after being once fixed, he begins to grow—but he only grows in summer. Inspect an oyster-bed, assuring her of her whereabouts.

And when at length the hoarse voices of the two men, hurrying down, concluded by road, struck momentary terror to her heart, the after-thought followed with blessed relief—the certainty that they were gone, and she was safe.

Mr. Myers and Janie were sitting sadly by the fire that they had just rekindled, neither of them with any heart to set about the preparation of the long-delayed meal, when the door creaked on its hinges, and something glided in pale and silent.

The next moment the jaspanned silver-box and the stocking lay in Mrs. Myers' lap, and Dora Klein was sobbing on her shoulder.

"Why, Dora," exclaimed the farmer, "What does this mean?"

And Dora told her story incoherently and full of sobbing pauses; and when it was concluded, Mrs. Myers threw her arms round the girl's neck and kissed her again and again.

"James, James," she cried, almost hysterically, "you will never mistrust Dora Klein again."

And James Myers, wiping a stray dewdrop or so from his eyes, confessed that little Dora Klein had been as true a heroine as Joan of Arc herself.

THE TEST.

The morning was breaking with that wild splendor now beheld as in the heights of the Abruzzi; and the wild tangled vines that overhung the path, were just glowing in the beams of the rising sun, and the dew-drops were like rubies and pearls.

He was a young man, and the fire of genius lighted up eyes naturally brilliant. His slight graceful figure was clad in a dress of dark velvet, slashed with silver—the fashion of the times—and the small medal that graced his cap showed that the wearer aspired to the rank of gentleman.

"By St. Julian, a lovely morning," he said; "and never lovelier scene charmed the eye of painter. Ha! my word, I am fortunate, thus to stumble on a path so exquisite."

High up among the beetling summits of the mountains, where the eagle's wing threatenes habit hidden by the slouching hat and feather that shaded them, two men sat, sullenly bending their gaze down the glen.

At the same time we are having Ludovico, said the oldest bandit, for such they were.

"The queen's troops are still scouring the lower passes; and no body to come to our aid. I am fortunate, thus to stumble on a path so exquisite."

High up among the beetling summits of the mountains, where the eagle's wing threatenes habit hidden by the slouching hat and feather that shaded them, two men sat, sullenly bending their gaze down the glen.

At the same time we are having, Ludovico,"